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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on human rights in Vietnam and Laos

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on behalf of the S&D Group

European Parliament resolution on human rights in Vietnam and Laos

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Vietnam and on Laos,
 - having regard to the 2007- 2013 Vietnam Country Strategy Paper,
 - having regard to the 2007- 2013 Laos Country Strategy Paper,
 - having regard to the ongoing negotiations on the new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Vietnam and to the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue held twice a year between the EU and the government of Vietnam,
 - having regard to the Universal Periodic Review Outcome on Vietnam by the UN Human Rights Council of 24th September 2009,
 - having regard to Rule 122(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, since the removal of Vietnam from the US black list of human rights offenders in 2006 and the country's accession to the WTO in 2007, the human rights situation in Vietnam has been deteriorating and whereas government critics, human rights defenders, political bloggers, independent church activists, are arbitrarily arrested and jailed,
- B. whereas administrative detention, religious repression, crackdowns on human rights defenders, stifling of press freedom and widespread use of the death penalty are serious concerns for the EU,
- C. whereas the Vietnamese Government has refused to respond to recommendations made during the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review, held from May to September 2009, in order to improve its human rights record,
- D. whereas several prisoners of conscience, including Nguyen Van Ly, Le Thi Cong Nhan, and Nguyen Binh Thanh, all sentenced for "propaganda against the government of the socialist Republic of Vietnam" have been denied proper medical care in prison while their health condition requires immediate hospitalisation,
- E. whereas Ms. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy, a Vietnamese writer and a leading figure in the movement for democracy in Vietnam, has been arrested again after serving a nine-month imprisonment in 2007 and whereas she suffers from severe diabetes while the Vietnamese authorities refuse to release her on bail or to allow her to receive any medication,
- F. whereas on 27 September 2009 hundreds of young Buddhist monks from the Bat Nha monastery were violently attacked and beaten and the monastery was vandalised while the state authorities and the police ignored their plea for help, whereas other monks who found refuge in the Phouc Hue temple were subjected to physical violence and

harassment by the police, whereas they are facing the risk of expulsion by the government on the ground that they have been occupying the Bat Nha monastery without permission and prior registration,

- G. whereas the European Union is the largest donor of development aid to Vietnam,
 - H. whereas Vietnam will assume the chair of ASEAN in 2010,
 - I. whereas on 2 November more than 300 persons preparing for a pacific protest in Vientiane to call for "*human rights respect*" and a "*multipartite system*" were arrested by the "*secret police*" of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (LPDR),
 - J. whereas ten years after the "26 October 1999 movement" launched by students and teachers of Vientiane, four leaders of the movement still remain in detention,
1. Expresses its great concern about the growing climate of intolerance in Vietnam towards human rights defenders and members of officially unrecognised religious communities;
 2. Calls on the government to cease all forms of repression against those who exercise their rights to freedom of expression, freedom of belief and freedom of assembly in accordance with international human rights standards and the Vietnamese Constitution;
 3. Urges the authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all human rights defenders, political prisoners and prisoners of conscience as their detention is arbitrary; also requests the authorities to guarantee their physical and psychological integrity in all circumstances and to offer those in need a possibility of being treated in a normal hospital;
 4. Recognises that some progress has been achieved in the recent years by the government of Vietnam towards establishing a more transparent legal framework of religious activities and ensuring its compliance with international standards; notes with concern that the country appears now to be backsliding on human rights; in this respect, urges Vietnam as a Member of the UN Security Council and future chair of ASEAN to comply with internationally accepted standards on freedom of religion and appeals to the government to resolve the issue of monks from the Bat Nha monastery peacefully;
 5. Recalls that the human rights dialogue between the EU and Vietnam should not be an objective in itself but should lead to concrete progress on human rights and democratisation; in this respect, calls on the Council and the Commission, in the framework of the ongoing negotiations for a new Partnership and Co-operation agreement which will include a clear democratic clause, to intensify pressure on the Vietnamese authorities in order to make them lift internet and blogging controls and prohibitions on privately owned media; allow groups and individuals to promote human rights, express their opinions and dissent publicly, accelerate local registration of religious organisations and equitable resolution of religious property disputes, take steps to abolish the death penalty, repeal or amend national security laws used to criminalise peaceful dissent, and release peaceful prisoners of conscience;
 6. Calls on the Lao authorities to immediately release all the people arrested during the

attempted peaceful demonstration on 2 November 2009;

7. Urges the Laotian Government to release the still imprisoned leaders of the 1999 students movement immediately and unconditionally;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the governments and parliaments of Vietnam and Laos, the governments of ASEAN Member States, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.