



Plenary sitting

B8-0477/2016

12.4.2016

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Honduras: situation of human rights defenders
(2016/2648(RSP))

Cristian Dan Preda, Gabriel Mato, Davor Ivo Stier, Andrej Plenković, Lorenzo Cesa, Roberta Metsola, Patricija Šulin, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Andrey Kovatchev, Joachim Zeller, Tunne Kelam, Ildikó Gáll-Pelcz, Lara Comi, József Nagy, Milan Zver, Marijana Petir, Giovanni La Via, Claude Rolin, Jarosław Wałęsa, Jiří Pospíšil, Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso, Adam Szejnfeld, Eva Paunova, Tomáš Zdechovský, Agnieszka Kozłowska-Rajewicz, Stanislav Polčák, Pavel Svoboda, Andrey Novakov, Romana Tomc, Ivan Štefanec, David McAllister, Salvatore Cicu, Lefteris Christoforou, Anna Záborská, Therese Comodini Cachia, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Dubravka Šuica, Csaba Sógor, Ivana Maletić, Luděk Niedermayer, Seán Kelly, Elisabetta Gardini, Francisco José Millán Mon
on behalf of the PPE Group

European Parliament resolution on Honduras: situation of human rights defenders (2016/2648(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
 - having regard to the EU Declaration on Human Rights Defenders,
 - having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950,
 - having regard to the Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the independent civil society, including human rights defenders plays an essential role in the defence and advancement of human rights and in the functioning of democratic societies;
- B. whereas on 3 March 2016 Berta Cáceres, co-founder and coordinator of the Council of Indigenous Peoples of Honduras (COPINH) a worldwide well known Honduran indigenous and environmental rights campaigner was murdered barely a week after she was threatened for opposing a hydroelectric project;
- C. whereas Berta Cáceres was an internationally recognised strong defender of indigenous and environmental rights in Honduras making her death an international outrage and causing a flood of tributes for her brave conduct in defending such rights; whereas her death raised public concerns on the issue of indigenous and environmental rights defenders in Honduras;
- D. whereas on March 15 Nelson Garcia, another indigenous activist, has been murdered in Honduras by unidentified gunmen as he returned to his family home in Río Lindo, North West Honduras;
- E. whereas the same day of the murder the government of President Juan Orlando Hernandez condemned the abominable crime which caused the death of Mrs Cáceres and declared the investigation into her murder a national priority;
- F. whereas the General Coordination Ministry Hernandez Alcerro pointed out that "Mrs Cáceres was the subject of protective measures decreed by Inter-American Human Rights Commission and these measures are granted accordingly to the wishes of the person who has been granted the right by the Commission";
- G. whereas the Government of the Republic of Honduras has promptly informed public opinion about the progress made in the investigation, in which it involved the Special Prosecutor for Indigenous Minorities as well as a specialized team from the United States;
- H. whereas the Honduran Government officially requested the UN High Commissioner for

Human Rights to provide technical advice, in accordance to its methodology and mandate and whereas he responded such a request;

- I. whereas on April 1 the Honduran Government, under formal request of the Attorney General, officially requested the cooperation of the Organization of American States (OAS) for the creation of an Ad Hoc Commission in the framework of the Mission of Support Against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras, to investigate on the murder of Mrs Cáceres, whereas the OAS immediately gave a positive response;
 1. Is shocked by the murder of the two Honduran human rights activists Mrs Cáceres and Mr Nelson García and strongly condemns these murders, extending its deepest condolences to their families;
 2. Reiterates the fact that freedom of expression is a vital component of any democratic society as it nourishes the culture of pluralism that empowers civil society and supports respect for the rule of law; therefore calls on the Honduran government to continue supporting freedom of media, civil society organisations and the activities of human rights defenders and to allow them to operate without fear, repression or intimidation;
 3. Stresses the swift reaction of the authorities to thoroughly investigate these murders in order to bring to justice those responsible; praises the diligence with which the authorities have led the investigation and the fast detention of the culprits of Nelson García's murder;
 4. Welcomes the fact that, upon request by the Honduran Government, the investigation on the murder of Mrs Cáceres includes representatives of the US, the UN High Commissioner of Human Rights as well as the OAS, which can provide the Honduran government with a substantial help in finding Mrs Cáceres's murderers;
 5. Calls on the Honduran government to maintain a strong pressure and make all possible effort to ensure that the murder of Berta Cáceres will not remain unpunished and take all possible measures to prevent the perpetration of similar actions against other environmental and indigenous activists under threat;
 6. Highlights the importance of human rights mechanisms, such as UPR recommendations and National Human Rights Action Plan and calls for its full implementation;
 7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the Government of the Republic of Honduras.