



Plenary sitting

B9-0236/2022

3.5.2022

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 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the continuous crackdown of political opposition in Cambodia
(2022/2658(RSP))

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Adam Bielan, Angel Dzhambazki, Anna Zalewska, Assita Kanko, Bogdan
Rzońca, Elżbieta Rafalska, Eugen Jurzyca, Ryszard Czarnecki, Tomasz
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on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the continuous crackdown of political opposition in Cambodia
(2022/2658(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Cambodia, in particular those of 14 September 2017 on Cambodia, notably the case of Kem Sokha, 14 December 2017 on Cambodia: notably the dissolution of CNRP Party, 13 September 2018 on Cambodia, notably the case of Kem Sokha, and 11 March 2021 on the mass trials against the opposition and civil society in Cambodia,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on Cambodia of 26 February 2018,
 - having regard to the 1991 Paris Peace Accords, in which a commitment to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cambodia, including on the part of international signatories, is enshrined in Article 15,
 - having regard to the Commission decision of 12 February 2020 to withdraw part of the tariff preferences granted to Cambodia under the European Union's Everything But Arms (EBA) trade scheme as of 12 August 2020,
 - having regard to the concluding observations of the UN Human Rights Committee on the situation of civil and political rights in Cambodia of 30 March 2022,
 - having regard to the 1997 Cooperation Agreement between the European Community and the Kingdom of Cambodia,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966,
 - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in the past two years, the Cambodian authorities pursued politically motivated prosecutions against more than 150 opposition political party leaders and members, some of whom fled the country fearing reprisals; whereas the government of Cambodia is also continuing a bogus treason prosecution against Kem Sokha, the co-leader of the dissolved main opposition party the Cambodian National Rescue Party (CNRP);
- B. whereas ahead of the commune elections of 5 June 2022 and next year's national elections, Cambodia's human rights situation has reached a crisis, with the government carrying out an intensified crackdown on the political opposition, independent media, and civil society;

C. whereas Cambodian authorities moved in April 2022 to block members of political opposition groups from challenging the country's ruling party in local elections set for June, arresting some on contested charges and disqualifying others from running; whereas Cambodia's National Election Committee has removed more than 100 candidates from the opposition Candlelight Party from the list of those running in the country's commune elections on June 5, 2022;

D. whereas on 17 March 2022, the Phnom Penh Municipal Court convicted 20 opposition politicians and activists, on vague charges of "incitement" and "conspiracy", consigning them to lengthy prison terms;

E. whereas Cambodian authorities have undermined peaceful activities by activists, restricted reporting by independent media, criminalized free speech, and enforced a de facto ban on peaceful assembly;

F. whereas the Cambodian authorities have stepped-up online surveillance by way of both new and existing laws that threaten free expression and the right to privacy; whereas the National Internet Gateway will enable the government to monitor all internet traffic and disconnect users' internet connections on arbitrary grounds;

1. Expresses its deep concern at the ongoing trials aimed at cracking down the opposition in Cambodia;

2. Calls on the Cambodian authorities to overturn the convictions of the opposition leaders that were based on politically-motivated charges and restore their political rights; calls on the Cambodian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all those imprisoned on politically motivated grounds and drop all politically motivated charges against them;

3. Stresses that all Cambodians, regardless of their political affiliation, should be guaranteed the right to a fair trial, in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the rights enshrined in Cambodia's Constitution;

4. Emphasizes that a credible democratic process requires an environment in which political parties, civil society and the media are able to carry out their legitimate roles without fear, threats or arbitrary restrictions; calls on the Cambodian authorities to take action to restore political freedoms in the country, to re-establish the necessary conditions for a credible, democratic opposition and to initiate a process of national reconciliation through genuine and inclusive dialogue;

5. Calls on the Cambodian Government to work towards strengthening democracy and the rule of law and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, which includes fully complying with the constitutional provisions on pluralism and freedom of association and expression;

6. Calls on the EEAS to closely monitor the situation in Cambodia and to attend the trials against the political opposition and their affiliates;

7. Calls on the EEAS and the Commission to compile a list of individuals responsible for the crackdown on the political opposition and other serious human rights violations in Cambodia with a view of imposing possible restrictive measures on them;
8. Welcomes the decision of the European Commission of 12 February 2020 to withdraw part of the tariff preferences granted to Cambodia under the European Union's Everything But Arms' (EBA) trade scheme;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the European External Action Service, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and of the ASEAN countries and to the Government and National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia.