

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

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31 March 2004

28/2004

## WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 51 of the Rules of Procedure

by Hans-Gert Poettering, Enrique Barón Crespo, Graham R. Watson and Charles Pasqua

on the plight of the hostages in Colombia

Expiry date: 6 May 2004

**28/2004**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Rule 51 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the kidnapping of people for any political, economic or religious reason is a crime against humanity that affects those kidnapped, their families, those close to them and society as a whole,
- B. noting that kidnapping is a major problem in Colombia and although it is on the decrease it is still happening on an unacceptably large scale,
- C. concerned at the deplorable conditions in which a large number of Colombians are being kept, including minors, soldiers and police officers kidnapped more than seven years ago, members of Congress such as Jorge. E. Gechem, Oscar Tulio Lizcano and Luis Eladio Pérez , members of Valle regional assembly, the former minister Fernando Araujo, the former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt and a number of Europeans,
- D. convinced of the need to try to ensure the immediate release of all the hostages, without making any distinction between them,
  1. Calls on the armed groups in Colombia - whether guerrillas or paramilitary forces - to free immediately all the hostages they are holding;
  2. Calls on the Commission and the Council to make every endeavour to secure the release of the captives;
  3. Instructs its President to forward this declaration to the Council and Commission.