

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

17 May 2000

B5-0437/2000 }
B5-0446/2000 }
B5-0451/2000 }
B5-0461/2000 }
B5-0470/2000 }

RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 50(5) of the Rules of Procedure

by the following Members:

Maij-Weggen, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
Schori, Sakellariou and Veltroni, on behalf of the PSE Group
Van den Bos and Maaten, on behalf of the ELDR Group
McKenna, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
Vinci, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

replacing motions by the following groups:

- ELDR (B5-0437/2000)
- Verts/ALE (B5-0446/2000)
- PSE (B5-0451/2000)
- PPE-DE (B5-0461/2000)
- GUE/NGL (B5-0470/2000)

on Burma

RC\413313EN.doc

PE 291.833}
PE 291.842}
PE 291.847}
PE 291.857}
PE 291.866} RC1

B5-0437/2000 }
B5-0446/2000 }
B5-0451/2000 }
B5-0461/2000 }
B5-0470/2000 } RC1

European Parliament resolution on Burma

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Burma, in particular its resolution of 16 September 1999,
- A. whereas on 27 May it will be ten years since Aung San Suu Kyi was elected President by a large majority of the people of Burma when the National League for Democracy (NLD) won 392 of the 485 seats in Parliament in free and fair elections and whereas the elected Parliament, which is now represented by the CRPP, has still not been permitted to convene,
- B. whereas many thousands of people have died and hundreds of thousands of people have fled to neighbouring countries such as India, Thailand and Malaysia, where they have for years been living in refugee camps and are dependent on humanitarian aid from NGOs and from those neighbouring countries,
- C. deploring the SPDC's continued intimidation and restrictions on Aung San Suu Kyi, who has recently been threatened with imprisonment, and other NLD members, who were again imprisoned in 1999, in many cases under very poor conditions, without adequate food or medical care,
- D. condemning the arrest of 40 NLD youth members and of U Aye Thar Aung of the Arakan League for Democracy in April 2000, as well as 82-year old Nai Tun Shein of the Mon National Democratic Front and Kyin Shin Htan of the Zomi National Congress in November 1999, after they spoke with Alvaro de Soto, then the UN's special envoy to Burma, and the detention of 83-year old Saw Mra Aung, the Speaker of the CRPP, who has been under arrest since the committee was formed in September 1998,
- E. deeply concerned about reports on special guerrilla retaliation units of the Burmese army, whose mission is to execute any civilians in Karen State suspected of interaction with the Karen National Union (KNU),

RC\413313EN.doc

PE 291.833}
PE 291.842}
PE 291.847}
PE 291.857}
PE 291.866} RC1

- F. whereas in Burma itself large numbers of people have also been moved to new areas, as a result of which whole communities have disintegrated and fallen into deep poverty,
 - G. whereas according to reports the Burmese army has the highest ratio of child soldiers in the world,
 - H. whereas at the end of March the governing body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) documented the SPDC's maintenance of a system of forced labour without any sign of improvement, and urged member countries and international organisations to withhold cooperation from the country,
 - I. whereas in a recent report the World Bank indicated that constructive economic reform cannot be effectively implemented without progress toward democratisation,
 - J. whereas nearly all universities in Burma have been closed since December 1996, and in the last twelve years have only been open for less than three years,
 - K. whereas investment by European multinational oil companies reportedly accounts for almost a third of the total official foreign investment in Burma, thus greatly benefiting the SPDC,
 - L. whereas the Government of the United Kingdom has called on Premier Oil to withdraw from Burma,
 - M. welcoming the fact that the Council has strengthened its Common Position on Burma by including a ban on export of equipment that might be used for internal repression or terrorism, naming those in the regime and its supporters to whom the visa ban applies, and imposing a freeze on the funds held abroad by those same persons,
 - N. noting however that the Council has still not responded to Aung San Suu Kyi's request to implement economic sanctions, and has not taken any significant economic measures against the SPDC, and noting that the USA has already halted investment in Burma,
 - O. regretting that the meeting of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) held in Rangoon on 1 and 2 May 2000, which brought together Ministers from the 10 member countries as well as Japan and China, permitted the military regime to use it as a platform to promote its own political interests,
1. Deeply regrets that ASEAN held its two-day meeting of the region's economic ministers without raising the fundamental question of respect for human rights;
 2. Calls on the SPDC to enter into a meaningful dialogue with the democratic opposition and ethnic groups;

RC\413313EN.doc

PE 291.833}
 PE 291.842}
 PE 291.847}
 PE 291.857}
 PE 291.866} RC1

3. Calls again on the SPDC to immediately release all political prisoners, to cease human rights abuses, and to allow political parties to function freely;
4. Calls on the SPDC to end its widespread practice of forced labour and the associated human rights violations, which has been described by the ILO as a 'crime against humanity';
5. Calls on the SPDC to open all universities to provide higher education for its civilian population and not just for the military elite; calls on the SPDC furthermore to stop recruiting child soldiers and to send those children to school instead;
6. Calls on the Council to demand that all European companies cease to invest in Burma;
7. Considers that the governments of the EU Member States should advise their citizens against visiting Burma as tourists, particularly because many new tourist facilities have also been created using forced labour;
8. Considers it high time that the EU Member States adopted a common policy on Burma and calls on the Commission and Council to take effective decisions on this subject as soon as possible;
9. Confirms the importance of EU-ASEAN cooperation and partnership but supports the exclusion of Burma from the ASEAN-EU process, and insists that the military regime of Burma should not be allowed to participate in the ASEAN-EU Senior Official Meeting in June;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the applicant countries for enlargement, ASEAN and its Member States and the Governments of Burma, India, China and Japan.