

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Session document

16 May 2001

B5-0358/2001 }
B5-0371/2001 }
B5-0377/2001 }
B5-0387/2001 }
B5-0397/2001 }
RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

- John Alexander Corrie and John Bowis on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Margrietus J. van den Berg, Hannes Swoboda and Renzo Imbeni on behalf of the PSE Group
- Lone Dybkjaer on behalf of the ELDR Group
- Neil MacCormick, Didier Rod and Marie Anne Isler Béguin on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Fodé Sylla and Ioannis Patakis on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- Verts/ALE (B5-0358/2001),
- PPE-DE (B5-0371/2001),
- ELDR (B5-0377/2001),
- GUE/NGL (B5-0387/2001),
- PSE (B5-0397/2001),

on the human rights situation in Cameroon

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PE 305.493}
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European Parliament resolution on the human rights situation in Cameroon

The European Parliament,

- A. whereas several reports from independent human rights organisations denounce the systematic use of torture and numerous instances of disappearances and extrajudicial execution in Cameroon, said to be the work of the Operational Command set up in February 2000 to combat large-scale banditry in Littoral Province,
- B. having regard to the discovery during 2000 of mass graves which have been linked to the activities of the Operational Command,
- C. whereas several top Cameroon gendarme officers, including Colonel Ousmanou Bobbo, were arrested and charged on 7 May 2001, and have been remanded in custody in Yaoundé, which shows a determination to apply the rule of law,
- D. whereas Cameroon's President Paul Biya set up a commission of inquiry in April which has also led to the arrests of 12 junior officers with the Operational Command,
- E. whereas, following a damning internal inquiry, the President of Cameroon has dismissed the brigadier in charge of that unit, the colonel responsible for the Douala centre and the captain in charge of criminal investigations,
- F. whereas human rights organisations currently investigating these recent events or speaking out against human rights violations have been threatened and intimidated,
- G. whereas in November 2000 the United Nations Committee Against Torture stated that torture was still widely used in Cameroon and advised the Cameroon Government to consider disbanding the special forces set up to combat large-scale banditry,
- H. whereas Cameroon is a signatory to the Cotonou Agreement, under which the signatory States undertake to respect human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law,
 - 1. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the cases of torture, disappearances and extrajudicial executions said to have been perpetrated by the special security forces in Cameroon;
 - 2. Welcomes the swift action taken by Cameroon's judicial authorities to investigate and arrest those allegedly involved in the disappearance of the nine youths from Bepanda and notes that Cameroon's international reputation will be enhanced by a transparent trial which publishes all the evidence;
 - 3. Calls for an independent committee of inquiry to be set up to shed light on the numerous acts of violence and torture and the disappearances and extrajudicial executions which have

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occurred in recent months and to ascertain whether the operational centre of the gendarmerie may have been responsible;

4. Calls on the Cameroon Government not to place any obstacle in the way of the activities of human rights workers and local organisations working on this case;
5. Calls on the European Commission and Council to attend the trials as observers and to provide technical assistance to the investigating magistrates – including advice on the protection of witnesses;
6. Calls on all political parties in Cameroon to avoid making partisan use of these events in order to allow an independent and impartial inquiry to be carried out;
7. Calls on the Council and Commission to open consultations with Cameroon, pursuant to the procedure under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement of 23 June 2000, with a view to shedding light on the human rights situation in this country;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, Council, the co-presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Assembly, the Government of Cameroon and the OAU.