

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

1999



2004

Session document

4 July 2001

B5-0484/2001 }
B5-0486/2001 }
B5-0497/2001 }
B5-0504/2001 }
B5-0512/2001 } RCI

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

- Iñigo Méndez de Vigo, Thierry Cornillet, Jorge Salvador Hernández Mollar and Giorgos Dimitrakopoulos, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Margrietus J. van den Berg, Rosa M. Díez González and Valter Veltroni, on behalf of the PSE Group
- Cecilia Malmström and Francesco Rutelli, on behalf of the ELDR Group
- Monica Frassoni, Matti Wuori, Nelly Maes, Bart Staes and Patsy Sörensen, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Lucio Manisco, Joaquim Miranda, Giuseppe Di Lello Finuoli, Yasmine Boudjenah, Felekna Uca, Emmanouil Bakopoulos and Laura González Álvarez, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group
- Mariotto Segni, Olivier Dupuis, Marco Pannella, Emma Bonino, Gianfranco Dell'Alba, Marco Cappato, Maurizio Turco and Benedetto Della Vedova

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- Verts/ALE (B5-0484/2001),
- PPE-DE (B5-0486/2001),
- PSE (B5-0497/2001),
- ELDR (B5-0504/2001),
- GUE/NGL (B5-0512/2001),

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on the death penalty in the world and the establishment of a European Day against the Death Penalty

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European Parliament resolution on the death penalty in the world and the establishment of a European Day against the Death Penalty

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the death penalty,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, signed on 10 December 1948, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, signed on 4 November 1950,
 - having regard to Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union,
 - having regard to Articles 2 and 19 of the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights, signed on 7 December 2000,
 - having regard to the call by the presidents of national and international parliaments for the abolition of the death penalty signed at the World Congress against the Death Penalty on 22 June 2001 in Strasbourg,
 - having regard to its annual report on Human Rights in the World and the European Union's policy on human rights,
 - having regard to the previous resolutions of the UN Commission on Human Rights,
 - having regard to the declaration on the Charter of Fundamental Rights by the Nice European Council of December 2000,
- A. reiterating that the abolition of the death penalty, which is iniquitous, degrading and contrary to the universal principles of justice, is essential to the affirmation of human dignity and for the progressive development of human rights, the first of which is the right to life,
- B. whereas the death penalty is carried out in thirty-eight of the US States, often unfairly against the innocent, the poor, minorities, the mentally ill, the mentally retarded and juveniles,
- C. congratulating the Swedish Presidency on its excellent and exemplary efforts to implement the EU guidelines on the death penalty, and underlining that this question should continue to be one of the highest human rights priorities under the Belgian Presidency,
- D. regretting, nevertheless, that according to Amnesty International during the year 2000 at least 1,475 prisoners were executed and 3,058 individuals were sentenced to death;

stressing that 88% of these executions took place in only four countries: China, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United States of America; regretting also that amongst those executed there were many who had not reached the age of majority at the time of their crime or were mentally handicapped,

E. stressing in this light the importance of the First World Congress Against the Death Penalty, which took place in Strasbourg on 21, 22 and 23 June 2001,

F. concerned at the high number of miscarriages of justice leading to the application of the death penalty, as exemplified by the case of Joaquín José Martínez, who was recently acquitted after spending several years awaiting execution,

1. Supports the 'Strasbourg Appeal' of 22 June 2001 for the abolition of the death penalty and for a worldwide moratorium on executions to be implemented without delay;
2. Once more strongly condemns the use of the death penalty - which currently continues to be applied in 87 countries -, particularly in the case of executions of minors or mentally handicapped people;
3. Proposes that a European Day against the Death Penalty be introduced, as the ultimate means of exerting pressure for the death penalty to be abolished in those countries where it continues to exist;
4. Commits the Belgian Presidency of the Council to reintroducing and this time bringing to a vote in the United Nations General Assembly of September next a resolution on the abolition of the death penalty and to taking all steps necessary to obtain its adoption;
5. Regrets the resumption of executions under federal law in the United States after a de facto moratorium of 38 years; calls on the USA to suspend any further executions and to respect the prohibition of the death penalty, as enumerated in several international instruments, against juvenile defendants, as well as the mentally handicapped; calls on the USA to withdraw forthwith its reservation concerning Article 6 of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights;
6. Calls on the Commission and the Council to make full use of the items in the 2001 budget set aside for the promotion of democracy and human rights, treating as a matter of priority and urgency any Community initiative aimed at achieving a moratorium on, and repeal of, the death penalty and giving practical support to all non-governmental organisations acting to this end;
7. Calls on the Commission to present to Parliament regular reports on the implementation of all the resolutions so far adopted;
8. Calls on the Russian Federation, Turkey and Armenia to fulfil their obligations as members of the Council of Europe and to abolish the death penalty without further delay;

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9. Calls on the Commission to consider the abolition of the death penalty and a universal moratorium on executions as an essential element in relations between the European Union and third countries, and to take this issue into account in concluding agreements with third countries;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission, the Member State Parliaments, the Governments of countries where the death penalty exists, the UN Secretary-General and the Chairman of the UN Commission on Human Rights.