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Session document

5 February 2002

B5-0035/2002 }
B5-0037/2002 }
B5-0039/2002 }
B5-0041/2002 }
B5-0045/2002 }
RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 37(4) of the Rules of Procedure by

- Johan Van Hecke on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Jannis Sakellariou, Margrietus J. van den Berg, Rosa M. Díez González, Michael Cashman, Anna Karamanou, Fiorella Ghilardotti and Valter Veltroni on behalf of the PSE Group
- Cecilia Malmström on behalf of the ELDR Group
- Matti Wuori and Nelly Maes on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Yasmine Boudjenah and Pernille Frahm on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- Verts/ALE (B5-0035/2002),
- ELDR (B5-0037/2002),
- PSE (B5-0039/2002),
- GUE/NGL (B5-0041/2002),
- PPE-DE (B5-0045/2002),

on the EU's human rights priorities and recommendations for the 58th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva

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PE 313.844}
PE 313.846}
PE 313.848}
PE 313.850}
PE 313.854} RC1

European Parliament resolution on the EU's human rights priorities and recommendations for the 58th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the EU Treaty and its provisions on human rights,
 - having regard to Regulations (EC) Nos 975/1999 and 976/1999 of 29 April 1999 on the development and consolidation of democracy and the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms under Articles 179 and 308 of the EC Treaty, which provide a legal basis for all human rights and democratisation activities of the EU under Chapter B7-70 of the Budget,
 - having regard to the 58th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, which will take place in Geneva from 18 March to 26 April 2002,
 - having regard to its earlier resolutions on the UN Commission on Human Rights adopted on 27 March 1996¹, 20 February 1997², 23 October 1997³, 19 February 1998⁴, 11 March 1999⁵, 16 March 2000⁶, 18 January 2001 and 5 April 2001,
- A. whereas the promotion and defence of human rights is a high priority for the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy and one of the fundamental principles of the Union,
- B. whereas all 15 EU Member States subscribed to the obligation to ‘respect and ensure respect for’ international humanitarian law when they ratified the four Geneva Conventions, as complemented by the additional Protocols of 1977,
- C. whereas the European Parliament seeks to exert a strong influence on the human rights strategy and priorities of the EU with regard both to thematic issues and specific regions and countries,
- D. whereas the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has shown an impartial and consistent commitment to safeguarding and promoting respect for the human rights of all individuals and groups worldwide,
- E. whereas the UN Commission on Human Rights is the main forum for debate on human rights within the UN system, and whereas human rights violations in specific countries are a legitimate matter of concern for it,

¹ OJ C 117, 22.4.1996, p. 13.

² OJ C 85, 17.3.1997, p. 143.

³ OJ C 339, 10.11.1997, p. 154.

⁴ OJ C 80, 16.3.1998, p. 237.

⁵ OJ C 175, 21.6.1999, p. 254.

⁶ OJ C 377, 29.12.2000, p. 335.

- F. whereas an unsatisfactory human rights situation is often caused and/or exacerbated by an absence of democracy and by inefficient and corrupt government structures,
 - G. whereas in the case of a considerable number of States the gap is widening between the human rights instruments they have signed and ratified and the treatment they inflict upon their citizens,
 - H. welcoming the growing number of demands for freedom and democracy throughout the world, but deploring the persistence of flagrant violations of human rights in many countries,
 - I. whereas a permanent and constructive dialogue with the representatives of civil society, NGOs and grass-roots organisations, in particular human rights organisations, is fundamental to effective action in favour of the promotion and defence of human rights around the world,
 - J. whereas the EU should play a well-prepared leadership role at this session in its capacity as the most important player in the 'Western Group', with a special responsibility to ensure the integrity and credibility of the work of the Commission on Human Rights as the world's primary human rights body,
 - K. whereas the Council of the EU stated in its 'European Union guidelines on human rights dialogues', adopted on 13 December 2001, that 'the fact that there is a human rights dialogue between the EU and a third country will not prevent the EU from either submitting a resolution on the human rights situation in that country or from providing support for an initiative by the third country',
 - L. whereas the fight against terrorism should in no way endanger the protection of fundamental human rights,
1. Reaffirms that respecting, promoting and safeguarding human rights is part of the European Union's ethical acquis and one of the cornerstones of European integration;
 2. Welcomes the fact that more and more countries are signing and ratifying human rights conventions, but regrets the growing failure by some countries to transpose their obligations effectively into domestic law and practice; stresses the need for full implementation of such conventions as well as effective inspection and control mechanisms;
 3. Calls on the Council and the Member States to work for the universal ratification of the main human rights instruments available to countries, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and calls on all governments, as a matter of urgency, to ratify these conventions without reservation, and to implement them;

4. Condemns the use of stoning and all forms of degrading and cruel punishment, notably in Iran, and urges other nations such as Nigeria and Saudi Arabia to prevent similar breaches of international human rights, and is deeply concerned by the State of Sokoto's Islamic court ruling that sentenced Ms Safiya Husaini Tungar-Tudu to death by stoning after finding her guilty of adultery, a punishable offence under Sharia law;
5. Calls on the Member States to appeal to all UN members to ratify or accede to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;
6. Calls on the Council to ensure that UNCHR resolutions are incorporated into EU human rights policy, in particular by making regular monitoring and evaluation of their implementation part of the political dialogue between the EU and the countries concerned, and to publicise this fact;
7. Calls on the EU Presidency to sponsor resolutions on China, in particular addressing the situations in Tibet and Mongolia, and Russia, in particular addressing the situation in Chechnya;
8. Calls on the EU Presidency to sponsor or co-sponsor resolutions on the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Zimbabwe, the Great Lakes region (including Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo) and Indonesia, as well as on Colombia, Burma and North Korea;
9. Calls on the EU Presidency to sponsor or co-sponsor resolutions on fundamental rights and freedoms versus anti-terrorist legislation and practices; asylum and refugee protection; human rights clauses; human rights defenders; the death penalty; torture; disappearances; freedom of religion and speech; children's rights; workers' rights; conscientious objection; racism; homosexual minorities and indigenous peoples;
10. Calls on the Council to report to the European Parliament in plenary immediately after the General Affairs Council in March 2002 on its progress in preparing for the session, and to the European Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee on a regular basis before, during and after the session;
11. Decides to establish a delegation of MEPs to participate in the forthcoming session; invites the Council and the Commission to establish full cooperation with this delegation;
12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the applicant countries, the UNCHR, and the governments of the other countries named in this resolution.