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2004

Session document

17 December 2003

B5-0545/2003 }
B5-0551/2003 }
B5-0557/2003 }
B5-0562/2003 }
B5-0567/2003 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

- Bernd Posselt and Ilkka Suominen on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Margrietus J. van den Berg on behalf of the PSE Group
- Bob van den Bos on behalf of the ELDR Group
- Patricia McKenna and Matti Wuori on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Lucio Manisco and Giuseppe Di Lello Finuoli on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- ELDR (B5-0545/2003),
- PSE (B5-0551/2003),
- GUE/NGL (B5-0557/2003),
- Verts/ALE (B5-0562/2003),
- PPE-DE (B5-0567/2003),

on the death sentence in the Philippines

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PE 339.894}
PE 339.907}
PE 339.913}
PE 340.629}
PE 340.634} RC1

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European Parliament resolution on the death sentence in the Philippines

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions calling for the abolition of the death penalty and for a moratorium on executions in the meantime,
 - having regard to the EU guidelines on the death penalty adopted by the Council on 6 June 1998,
 - having regard to the European Commission Communication of 8 May 2001 on the EU's role in promoting human rights and democratisation, which identifies the abolition of the death penalty as one of the thematic priorities for assistance under the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights,
 - having regard to Rule 50(5) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas former Philippines President Estrada implemented a moratorium on the death penalty in March 2000,
- B. whereas current President Arroyo has announced the lifting of this moratorium as of 1 January 2004,
- C. whereas about a thousand prisoners are currently being held under sentence of death in the Philippines,
- D. whereas President Arroyo's decision to lift the moratorium follows a number of high-profile abductions for ransom in the Philippines,
- E. whereas the rise in the number of unscrupulous kidnappings with ransom demands (of which 150 have been reported to the police since the beginning of the year, with some ending in the death of the victims) represents a real problem not only for the victims but also for the economy of the country, discouraging as it is to potential investors,
- F. whereas, according to Amnesty International's latest information, 112 countries have abolished the death penalty in law or practice and 83 other countries retain and apply the death penalty,
- G. whereas the application of the death penalty has nowhere had the effect of reducing the crime rate,
1. Reiterates its call for the universal abolition of the death penalty, and in the meantime for the establishment of a moratorium on executions;
 2. Considers it regrettable that President Arroyo has changed her position on the death sentence;
 3. Views with profound regret the fact that the death penalty continues to be applied in 83 countries, and in this context calls on the President of the Philippines to reverse her decision

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to end the existing moratorium as of 1 January 2004;

4. Calls on the government of the Philippines in any event to enforce the law prohibiting the sentencing of child offenders to death and to review as a matter of urgency actual cases involving minors, with a view to ensuring that the age of any suspect accused of a crime is clearly established prior to sentencing;
5. Calls on the Commission and the Council to make full use of the items in the EU budget 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;
6. Calls on the Council and the Commission to consider the abolition of the death penalty and a universal moratorium on executions as an essential element in relations between the EU and third countries, raising this issue when concluding or renewing agreements with third countries;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the UN Secretary-General, the Chairman of the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Government and President of the Philippines and the Filipino Parliament.