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B5-0123/04 }
B5-0126/04 }
B5-0147/04 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

- José Ignacio Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra and Fernando Fernández Martín on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Rolf Linkohr, Manuel Medina Ortega and Giovanni Pittella on behalf of the PSE Group
- Luís Queiró on behalf of the UEN Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- PPE-DE (B5-0123),
- PSE (B5-0126),
- UEN (B5-0147),

on Venezuela

European Parliament resolution on Venezuela

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its earlier resolutions on Venezuela, in particular that of 13 February 2003¹ and that of 15 May 2002 on the Second EU/Latin America and Caribbean summit²,
 - having regard to the statements of the Council Presidency of 23 February and 2 March 2004,
 - having regard to resolution No 040302-131 of the Venezuelan National Electoral Council,
 - having regard to the communication of the Organisation of American States (OAS) mission on the preliminary report on the process of verification of signatures,
- A. having regard to the decision of the National Electoral Council (NEC) to reject 143 930 signatures on grounds of incompatibility with the electoral register and a further 233 573 for alleged errors in the collection process, to 'object to' another 876 017 on grounds of similar handwriting, and to consider as valid only 1 832 493 of the 3 086 013 signatures submitted calling for a national referendum of recall,
- B. whereas the number of signatures required to call the referendum was 2 436 083, and the number actually collected was well over this,
- C. whereas the resolution has generated a wave of protests and disturbances in Venezuela in the last few days, leaving several citizens dead and many more wounded,
- D. having regard to the delays in publishing the results of the signature collection process, which were to be released first on 13 February and then only on 29 February; whereas the results have been published only in provisional form thanks to the decision to 'reconfirm' some of the signatures,
- E. whereas the decision adopted by a narrow majority on the NEC has not been endorsed by the observation mission of the OAS and the Carter Centre observers,
- F. whereas the NEC's decisions must take account of the spirit of the agreements reached on 29 May 2003 between the government and the Democratic Coordination, with the support of the OAS Secretary-General, pursuant to Resolution No 833 of the OAS Permanent Council, and must in all circumstances respect the rights of the citizens as enshrined in the Constitution of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela,
1. Rejects unconditionally the use of violence, deeply deplores the loss of human lives, and expresses its sympathy with the relatives of the victims;

¹ P5_TA(2003) 0065

² P5_TA(2002) 0242

2. Makes an appeal for calm and moderation; recognises the right of citizens to demonstrate peacefully within the limits of constitutional legality; and calls on the authorities to persevere with their endeavours to restore order in a context of respect for human rights and the rule of law;
3. Calls on the NEC to accept and adopt forthwith the recommendations of the OAS observation mission and the Carter Centre in relation to the preliminary report on the signature verification process;
4. Reiterates its support for the joint positions reached by the Government and the Democratic Coordination in the agreements of 29 May 2003, which offered a peaceful, dialogue-based, democratic, constitutional and electoral solution to the crisis, and stresses that those agreements remain entirely valid;
5. Expresses its concern at the fact that as things stand the above agreements, far from being the framework for events, are being ignored, as, furthermore, is the solution advanced at the negotiating table by the Group of Friendly Nations and the International Tripartite Commission;
6. Endorses in full the Irish Presidency's statements of 23 February and 2 March 2004 on Venezuela, a country which is host to numerous emigrant communities, some of them from EU Member States;
7. Urges the Commission, which is spending considerable sums in technical assistance for the application of the agreements, to act in coordination with the OAS observation mission and the Carter Centre observers, to ensure that the agreements are properly implemented and that the procedures are fully transparent;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Group of Friendly Nations and the OAS Secretary-General.