

P5_TA(2004)0101

Political assassinations in Cambodia

European Parliament resolution on Cambodia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Cambodia, and particularly to its resolutions of 13 March 2003 on the situation in Cambodia on the eve of the general elections of 27 July 2003¹ and 3 July 2003²,
 - having regard to the Cooperation Agreement between the EC and Cambodia which entered into force on 1 November 1999³,
 - having regard to the EC-Cambodia Strategy Paper 2000-2003,
 - having regard to the final report of the EU Election Observation Mission to Cambodia,
 - having regard to the statement of the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy on a Cambodia Tribunal,
 - having regard to the agreement between the UN and the Government of Cambodia concerning the creation of a special Cambodia war crimes tribunal,
 - having regard to the statement of the acting United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the killing of Cambodian trade union leader Chea Vichea,
 - having regard to Rule 50(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 22 January 2004 Chea Vichea, President of the Cambodian Free Trade Union of Workers and a founding member of the Sam Rainsy Party, was shot dead in broad daylight in downtown Phnom Penh,
- B. whereas Chea Vichea was the leader of a major trade union representing 38,000 of the country's 200,000 female textile workers, who are engaged in an industry which together with tourism is the country's most important resource,
- C. whereas the activist had been forced into hiding on several occasions as a result of death threats, and the government had failed to provide him with protection,

¹ P5_TA(2003)0103.

² P5_TA(2003)0339.

³ OJ L 269, 19.10.1999, p. 18.

- D. whereas this murder is the latest in a series of assassinations of high-profile political personalities over the past year, and those responsible have not so far been brought to justice, making 2003 the most violent year since the 1998 elections,
 - E. whereas this climate of political violence is favoured by the stalemate in the political situation since the general elections of 27 July 2003, which failed to produce the two-thirds majority required by the Constitution to form a government, despite the King's efforts to form a government of national unity,
 - F. whereas on 7 January 2004 Cambodia celebrated the 25th anniversary of the fall of the Khmer Rouge,
 - G. whereas the setting up of the war crimes tribunal has finally been agreed between the Government of Cambodia and the UN but still awaits ratification by the Cambodian Parliament,
 - H. whereas the former Prime Minister Khieu Sampan is the first Khmer Rouge leader to have acknowledged, recently, that genocide took place under Pol Pot's rule, despite which almost all surviving leaders of that time remain free, and none has so far been put on trial,
1. Strongly condemns the murder of Chea Vichea, and deplores all acts of political violence in Cambodia;
 2. Regrets that the police investigations have so far been unsuccessful, despite the arrest of two suspects, and calls for everything possible to be done to find those who planned and carried out the murder of Chea Vichea, and other murders and murder attempts against prominent opposition activists;
 3. Believes that such violence puts at risk the rights of all Cambodians and jeopardises progress towards a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Cambodia;
 4. Calls on the government of Hun Sen to put an end to the ongoing impunity in the country and to bring the murderers of Chea Vichea and other victims of political assassinations to justice;
 5. Urges the leaders of the political parties represented in the parliament to conduct negotiations seriously, aimed at the formation of a government, in order to put in place the much-needed reforms and law enforcement measures which would efficiently protect political and human rights activists from persecution;
 6. Urges that the parliament of Cambodia be enabled to take up its functions, not least in order to ratify the agreement between the UN and the government of Cambodia concerning the creation of a special Cambodia war crimes tribunal as soon as possible;
 7. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the governments of the Member States to raise with the Cambodian government the concerns about the assassination of political personalities and the existing impunity;

8. Reiterates its concern about child prostitution in the country and the trafficking in human beings to, within and from Cambodia for purposes of forced labour, including prostitution and begging, as well as adoption;
9. Suggests that an ad-hoc EU delegation visit Cambodia as soon as possible to evaluate the country's political situation;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Secretary-General of the UN, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the governments of the Asean member states, the Government of Cambodia, King Sihanouk, and the Funcinpec and Sam Rainsy Parties.