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EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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1984-1985

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Report

for the year 1983-1984

drawn up on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee

on human rights in the world and Community policy
on human rights

Rapporteur: Lord BETHELL

PE 87.955/fin./*A*
Or. EN

By letter of 22 May 1981 the Political Affairs Committee requested authorisation to draw up an annual report on human rights in the world.

By letter of 30 June 1981, the committee was authorised to draw up annually a report on this subject.

The following motions for resolution were referred to the Political Affairs Committee by plenary at its sittings of:

- 9 June 1983, motion for a resolution tabled by Mr von AERSEN and others on the situation in Uganda (doc.1-421/83) (The Committee on Development and Cooperation was asked for its opinion.)
- 9 June 1983, motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs LENZ and others on violations of human rights against nuns in Slovakia (doc.1-424/83),
- 4 July 1983, motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs VAN HEMELDONCK on the sentencing of Valeri Senderov (doc.1-163/83),
- 4 July 1983, motion for a resolution tabled by Mr PENDERS and others on extrajudicial executions (doc.1-438/83/rev.),
- 4 July 1983, motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs THEOBALD-PAOLI on the human rights situation in Uganda (doc.1-448/83) (The Committee on Development and Cooperation was asked for its opinion.)
- 4 July 1983, motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs THEOBALD-PAOLI on the release of the Czechoslovakian human rights activist, Peter UHL (doc.1-488/83).

At its meeting on 17-18 October 1983, the Political Affairs Committee appointed Lord BETHELL as rapporteur for the year 1983-84.

The report was considered by the Working Group on Human Rights at its meeting on 27 January 1984.

At its meetings on 28 February - 1 March 1984, and on 20-22 March 1984, the Political Affairs Committee considered the draft report. It adopted the motion for a resolution as a whole unanimously at the latter meeting.

The following took part in the vote: Mr FERGUSSON, Acting chairman and third vice-chairman, Mr HAAGERUP, first vice-chairman, Lord BETHELL, rapporteur, Mr BARBI, Mr BOURNIAS, Mr DESCHAMPS, Lady ELLES, Mr HABSBURG, Mr von HASSEL, Mr ISRAEL (deputising for Mr de la MALENE), Mrs LENZ and Mr d'ORMESSON.

This report was tabled on 23 March 1984.

The deadline for the tabling of amendments to this report appears in the draft agenda for the part-session at which it will be debated.

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The Political Affairs Committee hereby submits to the European Parliament the following motion for a resolution, together with explanatory statement:

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

for the year 1983-1984 on human rights in the world and Community policy on human rights

The European Parliament,

- Having regard to the following motions for resolution:
 - motion for a resolution tabled by M. van AERSSSEN and others on the situation in Uganda (doc. 1-421/83),
 - motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs LENZ and others on violations of human rights against nuns in Slovakia (doc. 1-424/83)
 - motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs VAN HEMELDONCK on the sentencing of Valeri Senderov (doc. 1-163/83)
 - motion for a resolution tabled by Mr PENDERS and others on extrajudicial executions (doc. 1-438/83/rev.)
 - motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs THEOBALD-PAOLI on the human rights situation in Uganda (doc. 1-448/83)
 - motion for a resolution tabled by Mrs THEOBALD-PAOLI on the release of the Czechoslovakian human rights activist, Peter UHL (doc. 1-488/83),
- Having regard to the resolution on human rights in the world adopted on 17 May 1983⁽¹⁾,
- Having regard to the report of its Political Affairs Committee (Doc. 1-68/84)
 - A. Recalling its commitment to draw up annually a report on human rights in the world;
 - B. Recalling the terms of its first annual report which gave particular emphasis to three fundamental rights: The right to life, the right to respect for the physical and moral integrity of the person, and the right to a fair trial by an independent court;
 - C. Whereas a commitment to democratic principles of government and to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms is a pre-condition of membership of the European Community;

⁽¹⁾ OJ No. C161, page 58 of 20.6.1983

- D. Regretting that very little progress has been noted during the past year with regard to the establishment of a comprehensive and consistent Community policy on human rights with respect to third countries;
- E. Convinced that the establishment and application of such a policy is more than ever essential, and responds to the wishes of millions of citizens who continue to make appeals to the Community and its Parliament to intervene actively in cases of human rights violations;
- F. Profoundly saddened by the continuing scale of human rights' violations in 1983, particularly with regard to political killings, disappearances and mass expulsions, which could be said to indicate a general deterioration of the situation with respect to human rights;
- G. (a) Expressing its deep sorrow for those who have been murdered in their countries for their efforts to establish human rights and restore democratic freedoms, particularly freedom of conscience, including numerous christian clergymen and civil rights campaigners in communist-ruled countries and Bahai believers in Iran, as well as the Salvadoran human rights campaigner, Marianella GARCIA VILLAS and the Philippine opposition leader, Benigno AQUINO, who gave their lives for the cause, and whose tragic fate has made them a symbol for those who continue to fight for human rights at great personal risk;
- (b) supporting all those still fighting for human rights today by dint of great personal effort and under the threat of death, such as:
- 1) Andrei SAKHAROV
 - 2) Anatoly SHARANSKY
 - 3) Ladislav LIS in Czechoslovakia;
- H. Conscious that while this report was being prepared, some twenty wars were raging in various parts of the world, torture and ill-treatment was known to take place regularly in at least fifty countries, and nearly half of the 157 member states of the United Nations held various categories of political prisoners;

1. Expresses its profound distress at the number of countries in the world where violation of human rights can be said to be "gross and systematic", and the fact that a majority of these violations were perpetrated by governments or their agents;
2. Is particularly preoccupied by information which has come to light recently showing the sheer scale of certain types of human rights' violations, particularly "disappearances" and political killings;
3. Notes with concern that, in the majority of countries listed in the Parliament's first new report, human rights violations continued during 1983;
4. Affirms that mere condemnation, and expressions of outrage, are not enough and that all possible steps must be taken by the European Community to prevent such occurrences and to alleviate suffering;
5. Notes that in some countries there have been substantial improvements in respect to human rights, and welcomes in particular the declared determination of Argentina's new democratically elected government to pursue in the courts those who committed violations of human rights under the military dictatorship;

Community Policy

6. Believes that the European Community and its institutions have considerable political and economic means at their disposal, which are not being used sufficiently at present, to promote and enhance respect for human rights;
7. Regrets that, despite its call last year for practical steps to be taken by Commission, Council and the Foreign Ministers meeting in European Political Cooperation, little obvious progress has been made in developing a consistent and comprehensive Community human rights' policy;

8. Welcomes the Council's instruction to the
complying with Parliament's request in its first
annual report ¹, to include a specific
reference to human rights in the new ACP-EEC Convention
and calls on the Commission to press with the utmost vigour
for the inclusion of such a reference on human rights;
9. Urges the Foreign Ministers meeting in political cooperation
to work out with the Community institutions appropriate arrangements for
preparing by the end of 1984, for submission to Parliament, a written report
outlining what is currently being done to promote respect for human rights in
third countries, and indicating how this activity can be developed further;
10. Requests the Commission in connection with the above mentioned report to
give particular consideration to the following:
- a) the possibility of making human rights the specific responsibility
of one Commissioner;
 - b) the current and potential modalities for linking Community aid
with minimum conditions of human rights' protection;
 - c) the feasibility of building human rights' considerations into
development programmes and external agreements, and the extent
to which human rights matters could be raised in a wide range
of the Community's external contacts;
 - d) increased budgetary provision for human rights - related projects
within the Community;
 - e) submission of a regular report to Parliament on follow-up to
Parliament's resolutions on human rights, and on other Community
activities related to human rights;

European Political Cooperation

11. Recalls the positive response given by Mr MERTES ⁽²⁾, as President-in-
office, to Parliament's first annual report on human rights, and
statements by successive Presidents-in-office that they consider human
rights matters to be an essential aspect of international relations.

¹ OJ C 161, 20.6.1983, page 58

² see debates of EP, May 1983

12. Notes that, in the context of European political cooperation, progress has been made in coordinating the position of the Ten on human rights' matters, particularly at international fora, such as the United Nations and CSCE ;
13. Believes, however, that, because of the need to achieve consensus within the Ten before taking joint initiatives, not enough progress has been made in raising specific human rights cases and issues with governments of Third countries;
14. Considers that the Foreign Ministers have not accorded sufficiently high priority to human rights' considerations in the Community's development and external relations policies, and have failed to give sufficient support to certain Commission initiatives in this respect (for instance, in the Lomé II negotiations);
15. Requests the President-in-office by September 1984 to make arrangements for Parliament to be informed in an appropriate way (possibly by regular written submissions to the Political Affairs Committee in the context of the quarterly colloquies) as to what initiatives on human rights have been taken by the Ten, at what level and with what effect, and how Parliament's resolutions on human rights have been followed up;

United Nations

16. Believes that the Ten must redouble their efforts to make more effective those United Nations bodies concerned with the protection and promotion of respect for human rights, in particular in order to improve compliance with, and enforcement of, existing international standards ;
17. Calls on the Ten to strongly support moves for:
 - a) the adoption of a Draft Convention against Torture, and an optional protocol;
 - b) the establishment of a High Commissioner for Human Rights, with the power to initiate direct contacts with Governments;

18. Believes that the Ten would be in a stronger moral position at the United Nations if all Community countries had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights, and its optional protocol, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural rights, and again strongly urges all Community countries to do so; ⁽¹⁾
19. Believes that while the United Nations is one of the world's major human rights bodies it is hampered by its intergovernmental nature and that therefore, representative institutions like Parliament have a vital role to play;
20. Reaffirms its commitment to use all appropriate means to raise and publicise human rights cases and issues and uphold the rights of individual citizens, including its contacts with representatives and delegations from third countries, with the non-governmental organizations and at inter-parliamentary and inter-party meetings;
21. Undertakes to establish appropriate structures at secretariat level to support these activities, in accordance with proposals made to the Bureau of Parliament by the Political Affairs Committee and its Working Group on Human Rights, and in accordance with Parliament's resolution on the 1984 budget ⁽²⁾;
22. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Foreign Ministers meeting in European Political Cooperation and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

(1)

See Annex I

(2)

Section I (Parliament) of the general budget of the European Communities for the financial year 1984