

**European Parliament resolution on human rights
17 February 2000**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the EU Treaty and its provisions on human rights,
 - having regard to the adoption of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in December 1998 by the UN General Assembly,
 - having regard to its resolution of 11 March 1999ⁱ on the EU's priorities for the 55th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights and its earlier resolutions on this issue,
1. whereas respect for human rights is a prominent priority of EU policies and one of the fundamental principles of the Union,
 2. whereas the promotion of human rights is established in the Treaties as an objective of the Common Foreign and Security Policy,
 3. whereas the international treaties on human rights form the core of the global system for the promotion and protection of these rights and whereas their implementation requires increased coordination amongst all the institutions involved,
 4. whereas a permanent constructive dialogue with the representatives of civil society, grass-root organisations, in particular independent human rights organisations, is vital for international action in favour of the promotion of human rights around the world,
 5. whereas the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has shown an impartial and consistent commitment to safeguarding and promoting respect for human rights of all individuals and groups around the world,
 6. deeply concerned that each year human rights defenders, their organisations, lawyers, journalists or activists, in spite of the above, continue to be victims of intimidation, reprisals, attacks and extra-judicial killings,
1. Points out that the need to protect and promote fundamental human rights - civil, political, economic, social, cultural and the right to development - has increased around the world;
 2. Believes that a concrete response to this major challenge requires supplementary financial resources, with special emphasis on voluntary funding;
 3. Calls on the EU and the UN to improve coordination and to step up their efforts to promote and protect human rights and prevent gross and systematic violations of these rights;
 4. Reminds the Council of the need to promote and increase practical cooperation, develop strategic planning, establish priorities and foster transparency and accountability;
 5. Recalls the crucial role of a culture respectful of human rights in achieving peace-making, peace-building, reconstruction and rehabilitation;
 6. Calls on the EU, together with its partners, to develop and support strategies which enable it to take consistent action in different regions, promoting national

- plans of action as well as ratification and implementation of existing international conventions;
7. Calls on the EU to give its full support to prompt action on complex issues such as extreme poverty, trafficking in human beings, protection of minorities, refugees, freedom of expression as well as the provision of assistance to needy groups, such as victims of torture, and emergency responses to situations of genocide and gross violations of human rights;
 8. Urges the UN Commission on Human Rights to appoint a Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders with a mandate to monitor, document and intervene on behalf of human rights defenders subjected to human rights violations, to devise an effective strategy to protect human rights defenders more effectively and to study ways in which to monitor the implementation of the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders as adopted by the UN in December 1998;
 9. Calls upon the Council actively to support the adoption of a resolution urging all States that have not yet abolished capital punishment to do so without delay, and in that context to establish a moratorium on all executions, in particular halting all executions of minors;
 10. Calls upon the Council to give its full support to the adoption of a resolution endorsing the Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflicts, urging all States to put an end to the recruitment and/or deployment of any person under 18 years of age for the purpose of armed conflict;
 11. Calls upon the Council to lend full support to the drafting of an optional protocol to the Convention against torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in order to establish a strategic inspection system of detention centres, by fully endorsing a resolution calling for the adoption of an effective protocol providing an effective inspection system;
 12. Calls on the Council to support the adoption of a resolution calling upon all states to ratify and implement the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, urging all states to adopt legislation strongly opposing all violence against women, including sexual violence;
 13. Calls upon the Council to lend full support to all efforts to improve the preparation of the World Conference on Racism and Xenophobia;
 14. Calls upon the Council to make ratification of the Treaty of Rome regarding the International Criminal Court a priority of its political action for the year 2000, and therefore invites the 14 Member States which have not yet ratified the Statute to do so as soon as possible;
 15. Welcomes the fact that rape in armed conflicts is now recognised as a war crime and calls on the Council to stress in all international fora that full protection must be ensured for victims who testify at international tribunals;
 16. Calls on the EU to take the initiative to initiate a UN Convention on all forms of trafficking of human beings, especially trafficking and abuse of children and minors;
 17. Calls on the EU to encourage and support the UNCHR to take all necessary steps to fight repression of independent media, to urge all states to end censorship, to protect the right of access to official information, to abolish defamation laws and to stop the restriction of access to modern information technology;

18. Calls upon the Council to support the adoption of and to co-sign with the US a resolution expressing its concern at the widespread human rights violations perpetrated in China, including the permanent oppression of Tibet;
19. Calls on the Council actively to discourage countries represented in Geneva from voting in favour of a no-action motion on China, which would prevent the Commission on Human Rights from starting to discuss the human rights situation in China;
20. Calls upon the Council to support the adoption of a resolution condemning the gross human rights violations perpetrated by the Russian armed forces in Chechnya;
21. Calls upon the Council to support the adoption of a resolution expressing great concern about human rights violations in the Former Republic of Yugoslavia and Kosovo, in particular as regards the situation of minorities as well as political prisoners;
22. Urges the Council to condemn firmly the systematic discrimination and the constant repression perpetrated against women by the Taliban Afghan regime which undermines their fundamental rights and can rightly be defined as gender apartheid, and further to condemn the systematic discrimination perpetrated against women by the government of Saudi Arabia;
23. Urges the Council to appeal to the Iranian authorities to end the widespread systematic oppression and to ensure that the Islamic Republic of Iran accedes *inter alia* to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women as a practical and unequivocal means of showing its commitment to initiating a process of reform of its policy, in particular towards women;
24. Calls upon the Council to support full investigation of systematic and gross human rights abuses in Sierra Leone, Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi, especially as regards war crimes and crimes against humanity; asks that the perpetrators of these crimes be brought to justice;
25. Calls upon the Council to support full investigation of human rights violations in East Timor, especially as regards crimes against humanity; asks that the perpetrators of these crimes be brought to justice;
26. Instructs its President to make the necessary arrangements to send a European Parliament delegation to participate in the 56th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, starting on 20 March 2000 in Geneva;
27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN.

ⁱ OJ C 175, 21.6.1999, P. 254