

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

20.6.2007

B6-0246/2007 }
B6-0247/2007 }
B6-0252/2007 }
B6-0254/2007 }
B6-0257/2007 }
B6-0259/2007 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure, by

- Michael Gahler, Anders Wijkman, Laima Liucija Andrikienė, Bernd Posselt and Eija-Riitta Korhola, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Pasqualina Napoletano, Marie-Arlette Carlotti and Ana Maria Gomes, on behalf of the PSE Group
- Marco Cappato, Marios Matsakis, Johan Van Hecke, Fiona Hall, Anneli Jäätteenmäki and Marco Pannella, on behalf of the ALDE Group
- Ryszard Czarnecki, on behalf of the UEN Group
- Margrete Auken and Raül Romeva i Rueda, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Luisa Morgantini and Feleknas Uca, on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- Verts/ALE (B6-0246/2007)
- GUE/NGL (B6-0247/2007)
- ALDE (B6-0252/2007)
- UEN (B6-0254/2007)
- PSE (B6-0257/2007)
- PPE-DE (B6-0259/2007)

on the situation in Ethiopia

RC\673367EN.doc

PE 391.080v01-00}
PE 391.082v01-00}
PE 391.087v01-00}
PE 391.089v01-00}
PE 391.092v01-00}
PE 391.094v01-00} RC1

EN

EN

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Ethiopia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the post-election crisis and serious human rights violations, in particular those of 7 July 2005 on the human rights situation, 13 October 2005 on the situation in Ethiopia, 15 December 2005 on the situation in Ethiopia and the new border conflict, 15 November 2006 on Ethiopia and 10 May 2007 on the Horn of Africa: EU regional political partnership for peace, security and development,
- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 11 June 2007 an Ethiopian court found 38 senior opposition figures guilty of charges related to mass protests after disputed elections two years ago and ranging from ‘outrage against the constitution’ to aggravated high treason,
- B. whereas sentencing is expected next month and most of the accused could face the death penalty,
- C. whereas among those found guilty were Hailu Shawel, President of the Coalition for Unity and Democracy, Professor Mesfin Woldemariam, former Chair of the Ethiopian Human Rights Council, Dr Yacob Hailemariam, UN Special Envoy and former Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Dr Berhanu Nega, Mayor-elect of Addis Ababa, and Ms Birtukan Mideksa, former judge, all declared ‘prisoners of conscience’ by Amnesty International,
- D. whereas the now convicted 38 prisoners, who all refused to plead guilty, were among the estimated 30 000 people arrested in a government crackdown on demonstrators protesting at fraud and vote-rigging by Prime Minister Meles Zenawi’s government in the 2005 polls,
- E. whereas the Commission of Inquiry that the Ethiopian Parliament established at the end of November 2005 to investigate the violence of June and November 2005 concluded that 193 civilians were killed and 763 injured by government security forces; whereas the Commission’s report found that some of the victims were killed with a single bullet wound to the head and that sharpshooters targeted certain opposition leaders; and whereas, according to the same report, protesters were unarmed and the security forces used excessive force,
- F. whereas the report also states that a 14-year-old boy was killed during the demonstrations, that his brother, who ran out to help him, was shot from behind and that Etenesh Yimam, the wife of an opposition candidate, was gunned down outside her house in front of her children,
- G. whereas the opposition Coalition for Unity and Democracy blamed the deaths on the security forces, but Mr Meles accused the opposition of starting the violent protests,
- H. whereas the President and Vice-President of the Inquiry Commission were forced to flee following pressure by the government to reverse the Commission’s findings, and whereas

RC\673367EN.doc

PE 391.080v01-00}
PE 391.082v01-00}
PE 391.087v01-00}
PE 391.089v01-00}
PE 391.092v01-00}
PE 391.094v01-00} RC1

testimony to these events was given by Inquiry Commission Vice-President Woldemichael Meshesha to the European Parliament, during a hearing held on 5 June 2007,

- I. whereas journalists keep being arrested and prevented from exercising their profession,
- J. whereas in January 2007 police forces allegedly beat and severely injured students in the towns of Dembi Dollo and Ghimbi, causing the death of three of them and detaining between 30 and 50 students,
- K. whereas individuals accused of international terrorism, including EU citizens, have been arbitrarily detained and 'rendered',
- L. whereas political and democratic stability in Ethiopia is crucial to the development of the countries of the Horn of Africa,
- M. whereas Ethiopia needs a reconciliation process to restore the derailed democratic gains and pave the way for sustainable development that is respectful of fundamental human rights, political pluralism, minority rights, particularly those of ethnic Oromos, and the rule of law,
- N. whereas Ethiopia is a signatory to the Cotonou Agreement, Article 96 of which stipulates that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential element of ACP-EU cooperation,
- O. whereas members of the United Nations Security Council met on 16 June 2007 in Addis Ababa with African Union (AU) and Ethiopian officials, as well as with the AU Peace and Security Council,
 - 1. Calls on the Ethiopian Government to release immediately and unconditionally all political prisoners, including elected members of parliament, CUD leaders, human rights activists, journalists, teachers, students, trade union activists and ordinary citizens;
 - 2. Deplores the recent decision by an Ethiopian court to find guilty 38 opposition leaders, human rights activists and journalists, and strongly condemns the fact that this occurred without defence proceedings in a judicial process that does not respect international standards for free and fair trials and has been widely condemned by international human rights organisations;
 - 3. Urges the Ethiopian judicial authorities to reconsider their verdict, and calls on the Ethiopian Government to repeal possible death and/or prison sentences and to guarantee the independence of the judicial system;
 - 4. Welcomes the release of 28 defendants on 10 April 2007, including seven journalists, one of whom, Serkalem Fasil, was six months pregnant when arrested and was denied adequate medical care;
 - 5. Calls for the establishment of an international independent Inquiry Commission, and urges the Ethiopian Government to allow it to pursue the original findings of the Commission

independently and to give it unlimited access to the sources and documents that are relevant to the investigation;

6. Condemns the arrests of independent journalists and asks the Ethiopian Government to guarantee freedom of the press;
7. Urges the Ethiopian Government promptly to investigate the incidents involving students in Dembi Dollo and Ghimbi and to hold those responsible accountable;
8. Asks the Ethiopian Government to disclose the total number of persons detained and to allow all detainees access to their families, legal counsel and medical care;
9. Condemns the arbitrary detention and renditions of individuals accused of international terrorism, including EU nationals, and calls on the Ethiopian Government immediately to disclose information about these 'renditions';
10. Calls on the Ethiopian regime to respect human rights, the rule of law and democratic freedom, including the right to assembly and freedom of expression, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Union Charter of Human and People's Rights, and to implement the International Convention on the Elimination of All form of Racial Discrimination;
11. Urges the Ethiopian Government to engage in a serious dialogue with the opposition and civil society with a view to national reconciliation, allowing a real democratisation process to take place;
12. Calls on the Commission, the Council, the African Union and the United Nations to encourage and support an all-inclusive inter-Ethiopian dialogue, with the participation of political parties and civil society, in order to work out a lasting solution to the current political crisis;
13. Calls on the Commission and the Council to make a clear request to the Ethiopian Government to release all political prisoners immediately and unconditionally;
14. Calls on the Commission, the Council and the Member States to condemn the use of the death penalty in Ethiopia;
15. Requests the Commission and the Council to share with the European Parliament the reports produced by those who, on behalf of the Commission and Council, have been observing the current trials, including the Briton Michael Ellman and others;
16. Calls on the Commission and the Council strongly to condemn the Ethiopian Government for the brutal repression that followed the May 2005 elections and for the serious breaches of human rights and democracy perpetrated by the authorities ever since, and to monitor the situation in Ethiopia;

17. Calls on the Commission and the Council to pursue a coherent post-electoral policy in Ethiopia;
18. Calls on the European Council to consider the application of targeted sanctions against senior government officials;
19. Calls on the Commission and the Council to support victims of human rights atrocities and relatives of political prisoners;
20. Requests the Commission and the Council to take concrete action to put the derailed democratic process back on track and to avoid further deterioration of the human rights situation in Ethiopia, which may have far-reaching consequences in the region if it is not addressed properly and without delay;
21. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support, through cooperation instruments, the development of free media broadcasting in Ethiopia;
22. Calls on the Commission and the Council to take a coordinated stance consistent with Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement; stresses that the development cooperation programmes under the Cotonou Agreement should depend on respect for human rights and good governance;
23. Calls on the UN to appoint a 'special rapporteur' to conduct an investigation in Ethiopia into judicial independence and arbitrary detentions, the human rights situation, including minority rights, post-election violence and killings, and charges of treason and outrage against the constitutional order directed at opposition leaders, journalists and civil-society activists;
24. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the African Union Commission and the Pan-African Parliament, the Ethiopian Government and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.