Resolution on the situation in Ethiopia

2007/2580(RSP) - 21/06/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a joint resolution on Ethiopia, and called 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. It deplored the recent decision by an Ethiopian court to find guilty 38 opposition leaders, human rights activists and journalists, and strongly condemned the fact that this occurred without defence proceedings in a judicial process that did not respect international standards and had been widely condemned by international human rights organisations.

The Ethiopian judicial authorities must reconsider their verdict. Parliament called on the Ethiopian Government to repeal possible death and/or prison sentences and to guarantee the independence of the judicial system. Among a range of demands on the Ethiopian authorities in their resolution, Members called for the establishment of an international independent Commission of Inquiry, and for a free press.

Parliament went on to ask 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. The Commission and the Council must pursue a coherent post-electoral policy in Ethiopia, and consider the application of targeted sanctions against senior government officials, as well as support victims of human rights atrocities and relatives of political prisoners.

Furthermore, the Commission and the Council were asked 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 might have far-reaching consequences in the region if not addressed properly and without delay. They must take a coordinated stance consistent with Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement. Parliament stressed that the development cooperation programmes under the Cotonou Agreement should depend on respect for human rights and good governance. It called 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.