Resolution on Tibet, in particular self-immolation by nuns and monks

2011/2874(RSP) - 27/10/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 51 votes to 0, with 4 abstentions, a resolution on Tibet, in particular self-immolation by nuns and monk.

The resolution was tabled by the, Greens/EFA, EFD, ECR, ALDE and EPP groups.

Noting that the Chinese Government has imposed drastic restrictions on Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in the Aba/Ngaba county prefecture in Sichuan province, and in other parts of the Tibetan plateau, including brutal security raids, arbitrary detention of monks, increased surveillance and a permanent police presence inside the monasteries, Parliament **condemns the Chinese authorities' continued crackdown on Tibetan monasteries**. It calls on them to lift the restrictions and security measures imposed on monasteries and lay communities, and to restore the lines of communication to the monks of Kirti Monastery. It is deeply concerned by reports, since last April, of eight Tibetan Buddhist monks and one nun **self-immolating** near the Ngaba Kirti Monastery in China's Sichuan province, and states that self-immolation can be seen as a form of protest and an expression of the increasing desperation felt by young Tibetans, especially within the community of Kirti Monastery. However, whatever personal motivations may underlie these acts, they must be considered in the wider context of religious and political repression in Aba/Ngaba county, which can be traced back many years. Members urge the Chinese Government to **lift the restrictions and heavy-handed security measures** imposed on the Kirti Monastery, and to provide information as to the whereabouts of monks forcibly taken from the monastery. The Chinese authorities are asked to allow independent international media and human rights monitors to visit the area.

Parliament calls on the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to **release a public statement** expressing the EU's concern as regards the escalating situation in Aba/Ngaba county and urging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, along with restraint on the part of security police. It also asks the HR/VP to **raise human rights issues at the next EU-China Summit**, and calls on the President of the Commission and the President of the European Council clearly to uphold Tibet's unique religious, cultural and linguistic identity in the course of their official speeches during the opening or closing of the summit, in the event that it is not on the agenda for discussion. Similarly, the EEAS and the EU delegation to China are asked **constantly to monitor the human rights situation in China** and to continue to raise – in meetings and correspondence with Chinese officials – the specific cases of individual Tibetans imprisoned for the peaceful exercise of religious freedom, and to present a report to Parliament within the next 12 months, suggesting actions to be taken or policies to be implemented. Members reiterate their call to the Council to **appoint an EU Special Representative for Tibet** with a view to facilitating the resumption of dialogue between the Chinese authorities and the Dalai Lama's envoys in relation to the determination of genuine autonomous status for Tibet within the People's Republic of China.

Member States and the EU are urged to **call on the Chinese Government to resume its dialogue with the Dalai Lama** and his representatives with a view to bringing about **genuine autonomy for Tibetans** within the People's Republic of China, and to stop its campaign to discredit the Dalai Lama as a religious leader. Those Member States which are members of the G-20, and on the President of the Commission and the President of the European Council should raise the human rights situation in Tibet with the President of the People's Republic of China, Hu Jintao, at the upcoming G-20 Summit in Cannes on 3 and 4 November 2011.

Parliament goes on to call on the Chinese Government to:

- guarantee freedom of religion to all its citizens in accordance with Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to abolish criminal and administrative penalties which target religion and have been used to punish citizens for exercising their right to freedom of religion;
- respect the rights of Tibetans in all Chinese provinces and to take proactive steps to resolve the underlying grievances of China's Tibetan population;
- cease promoting policies which threaten the Tibetan language, culture, religion, heritage and environment, in contravention of the Chinese Constitution and the Chinese law granting autonomy to ethnic minorities;
- provide full details as to the status of the 300 monks who were taken away from Kirti Monastery in April 2011, in relation to which several Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council, including the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, have intervened;
- be accountable for the status of those Tibetans who have been ‘hospitalised’ after self-immolating, including as regards their access to medical treatment;
- refrain from implementing counterproductive policies and aggressive ‘patriotic education’ programmes in Tibetan-populated areas such as Sichuan, Gansu and Qinghai, places where human rights violations have created tensions;
- respect traditional Tibetan death rites and to return remains in accordance with Buddhist rituals and without delay or hindrance;
- respect the religious freedoms and basic human rights of the monastic and lay communities in Ngaba, and to suspend the implementation of religious control regulations in order to allow Tibetan Buddhists to identify and educate religious teachers in a manner consistent with Tibetan traditions, to review the religious and security policies implemented in Ngaba since 2008, and to open a transparent dialogue with the leaders of Tibetan Buddhist schools;
- respect internationally agreed human rights standards and to abide by its obligations under international human rights conventions with respect to freedom of religion or belief;

Lastly, Parliament expresses the need for the rights of China's minority communities to be put on the agenda for future rounds of the EU-China human rights dialogue.