Resolution on Laos: the case of Sombath Somphone

2013/2535(RSP) - 07/02/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Laos, expressing its deep concern regarding the disappearance of Sombath Somphone.

The resolution was tabled by the ECR, Greens/EFA, GUE/NGL, EPP, ALDE, and S&D groups.

It recalls that Somphone, a prominent figure in social development and youth education, disappeared on 15 December 2012 and that the UN and 65 international human rights organisations have expressed fears that he may have been subjected to enforced disappearance and their grave concern over his safety and the lack of progress in the investigations by the Lao authorities into the facts of his disappearance.

Members echo these **concerns on the tardiness and lack of transparency of the investigations** into the disappearance of Sombath Somphone and call on the VP/HR closely to **monitor the Lao Government's investigations** into this disappearance.

Furthermore, the EU must include Laos in its **priorities for the 22nd session of the UN Human Rights Council**. Members want Laos to respect the rights of free expression and association and the rights of minorities, ending all restrictions on the exercise of this right as recommended in the UN Universal Periodic Review of 21 September 2010.

Parliament goes on to call on:

- the ASEAN Human Rights Commission to establish a committee of inquiry to investigate the events surrounding the enforced disappearance of Sombath Somphone;
- LAOS to make enforced disappearance a criminal offence and to take all necessary steps to end the practice of arbitrary arrests and secret detention.