Resolution on Cambodia’s draft laws on NGOs and trade unions

2015/2756(RSP) - 09/07/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 84 votes to 0, with 6 abstentions, a resolution on Cambodia’s draft laws on NGOs and trade unions.

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

Members recalled that the draft law governing trade unions would violate the right to organise and would severely limit the rights of independent trade unions, including existing unions. It sets an unreasonably high minimum threshold for the number of workers who must join before a union can be formed (20%). It also stated that the draft law gives sweeping powers to Labour Ministry officials as regards the approval of strikes and the suspension of union registration on flimsy grounds and without due process.

Members urged the Government of Cambodia to **withdraw the draft Law** on Associations and Non-Governmental Organisations (LANGO) and urged it to recognise the legitimate and useful role played by civil society, trade unions and the political opposition in contributing to Cambodia’s overall economic and political development.

They also called on the Cambodian Government to publicly disclose the current draft and to consult with experts and trade union members with a view to revising it, in compliance with international law and ILO conventions, before resubmitting the draft for consideration. According to the UN, such legislation should be adopted only through a comprehensive participatory process that is inclusive enough to ensure that all stakeholders are committed to its substance.

Strengthen democracy in Cambodia: Parliament encouraged the Government of Cambodia to continue to strengthen democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular freedom of expression and assembly. Lastly, it called on the Vice-President of the Commission /High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to support the call for the withdrawal of the draft LANGO and the draft law governing trade unions, and to raise this issue with the Government of Cambodia without delay.