Resolution on the situation in Thailand

2015/2875(RSP) - 08/10/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 581 votes to 35 with 35 abstentions a resolution on the situation in Thailand.

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

Parliament stated it was deeply concerned about the deteriorating human rights situation in Thailand following the illegal coup of May 2014. It urged the Thai authorities to:

- lift **repressive restrictions on the right to liberty** and the peaceful exercise of other human rights, in particular those relevant to peaceful involvement in political activities;
- **overturn convictions and sentences**, to withdraw charges and to release individuals and media operators who had been sentenced or charged for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression or assembly;
- revoke immediately **Section 44** of the interim constitution and related provisions that serve as a basis for the Thai authorities to repress fundamental freedoms and commit human rights violations with impunity.

Members called on the Thai Government to comply with its own constitutional and international obligations as regards the independence of the judiciary, the right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, and political pluralism, especially in the light of the growing severity of its ‘anti-defamation’ laws.

Parliament asked the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Delegation, as well as Member State delegations, to use all available instruments to ensure respect for human rights and the rule of law in Thailand, in particular by continuing to **observe investigations and trial hearings of opposition leaders.** It encouraged the EU and the Thai Government to engage in a **constructive dialogue** on matters relating to human rights protection and democratisation processes in Thailand and in the region. Members noted that the EU, which was Thailand’s third-largest trading partner, had put on hold fledgling negotiations with Thailand for a bilateral free trade agreement (FTA), which commenced in 2013, and had refused to sign the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) finalised in November 2013 until a democratic government was in place.

Parliament supported the EEAS and the Commission in **maintaining economic and political pressure** in order to ensure Thailand’s return to democratic governance, reminding the Thai Government, in this connection, that **no progress should be expected on the FTA and PCA** between the EU and Thailand as long as the military junta remained in power.

Members went on to take note of the measures taken by the Thai Government to comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and to put an end to endemic modern-day slavery in the **supply chain of its fishing industry**. They encouraged the government to implement these measures as a matter of urgency and to step up its efforts. The international community, and the EU in particular, should put all their efforts into fighting human trafficking, slave work and forced migration by advocating international collaboration on the monitoring and prevention of human rights violations relating to labour issues.

Lastly, Parliament welcomed the decision to dismiss the **criminal defamation case** against workers' rights defender **Andy Hall**, an EU citizen and his subsequent release. It called for the computer crime and criminal defamation cases initiated against him at Southern Bangkok Criminal Court also to be dropped, asks the EU Delegation to continue to follow his legal situation closely and to attend his trial.