Resolution on Guatemala, notably the situation of human rights defenders

2017/2565(RSP) - 16/02/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Guatemala, notably the situation of human rights defenders.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, Greens/EFA and EFDD groups.

Members strongly condemned the recent murders of Laura Leonor Vásquez Pineda, Sebastian Alonzo Juan and several other Guatemalan journalists, as well other human rights defenders in Guatemala carried out in 2016.

While welcoming Guatemala's efforts in its fight against organised crime, Members asked that these be stepped up and recognised the enormous difficulty it faces in providing security and freedom to all its citizens.

They called for the **urgent and mandatory implementation of the precautionary measures recommended by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR)** and called on the authorities to reverse the decision that unilaterally removes national precautionary measures benefitting human rights defenders.

As a reminder, the IACHR recommended the need to develop a public policy for the protection of human rights defenders.

Members also called on the Guatemalan authorities to accelerate the procedures to ensure the establishment of a national mechanism for free and informed prior consultations, as foreseen under ILO 169.

The Guatemalan Government is called upon to launch wider social consultations concerning the hydroelectric plants, mining projects and oil companies. Members called on the EU institutions to ensure that **no European assistance or support** promotes or permits development projects without meeting the obligation for prior, free and informed consultation with indigenous communities.

Strengthening the justice system: Members invited the Guatemalan authorities to allocate sufficient funding and human resources to the judiciary and in particular to the Attorney General's office.

They asked the European Union to support the Attorney General's Office and strongly rejected any kind of pressure, intimidation and influence that jeopardises independence, legal pluralism and objectivity.

Lastly, Members called on those EU Member States that have not done so to swiftly ratify the EU-Central America Association Agreement and asked the European Union and its Member States to make use of the mechanisms laid down in the Association and Political Dialogue Agreement to strongly encourage Guatemala to pursue an ambitious human rights agenda and the fight against impunity.