Resolution on EU priorities for the UN Human Rights Council sessions in 2017

2017/2598(RSP) - 16/03/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on EU priorities for the UN Human Rights Council sessions in 2017.

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

UN Human Rights Council: recalling the need for the respect of human rights to be mainstreamed in all EU policy areas, Parliament recalled the EU's commitment to continue to support and defend its integrity, independence and functioning. The EU should engage actively and consistently with UN human rights mechanisms.

Members encouraged all states to take **concrete steps** to act on the Universal Periodic Review recommendations and to overcome shortcomings by putting in place an implementation and follow-up mechanism, including the establishment of national plans of action and national coordination mechanisms.

Thematic priorities: Parliament considered that the European Union should focus on the following issues:

- the importance of the role of human rights NGOs and defenders in the promotion and protection of human rights, whistle-blowers, journalists or bloggers and condemning any act of violence, harassment, intimidation or persecution against them;
- the issues of freedom of expression online, digital freedoms and the importance of a free and open internet to be raised in all international fora;
- the right to freedom of association and assembly;
- condemning any kind of discrimination and persecution on any ground or status such as race, colour, language, religion and belief, gender identity and sexual orientation, social origin, caste, birth, age or disability;
- advocating zero tolerance for the death penalty;
- speaking out in support of the UN's work against torture and other cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment, mass executions and other executions;
- condemning the attacks by terrorist or paramilitary organisations against civilians, particularly women and children.

Parliament expressed its support for the **International Criminal Court** (ICC) as a key institution for holding perpetrators to account with regard to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The EU is called upon to:

- work actively towards an initiative on UN recognition of the genocide against ethnic and religious minorities committed by so-called ISIS/Daesh;
- encourage all states to place human rights at the centre of their respective development policies and to implement the 1986 UN Declaration on the Right to Development;
- continue to promote equality between women and men and to actively support the work of UN Women and gender mainstreaming initiatives in its activities and programmes;
- continue to promote children's rights, by eliminating child labour, recruitment of child soldiers, deprivation of liberty, torture, trafficking, child, early and forced marriage, sexual exploitation and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation;
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promote the rights of persons with disabilities, including their equal participation and social inclusion.

Parliament welcomed the **UN's New York Declaration** for Refugees and Migrants, which led to the adoption of a global compact on a comprehensive refugee response (CRR) framework and the commitment that applies to migrants and refugees. It called for the EU and its Member States to take the lead in these international efforts, and to uphold, in accordance with their obligations under international law, their commitments to protect the human rights of asylum seekers, refugees, migrants and all displaced persons.