Resolution on the recent human rights developments in the Philippines

2022/2540(RSP) - 17/02/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted 627 votes to 26, with 31 abstentions, a resolution on the recent human rights developments in the Philippines.

The text adopted was tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR, The Left groups and Members.

Since the election of President Rodrigo Duterte in May 2016 and the start of the ‘war on drugs’, there has been an appalling number of extrajudicial killings and human rights violations in the Philippines. According to civil society organisations, between 12 000 and 30 000 people have been killed during drug raids, while authorities attribute 6 200 deaths to police action during these raids. President Duterte has explicitly encouraged the police to commit extrajudicial executions and promised them immunity, while police officers involved in such practices have received promotions. He has also vowed to continue his anti-drug campaign until the end of his current presidential term in June 2022.

In addition, at least 146 human rights defenders and at least 22 journalists have been killed since June 2016 and to date there have no convictions in any of these cases.

Parliament strongly condemned the thousands of extrajudicial killings and other serious human rights violations related to the war on drugs and called for a **robust response** from the EU. It called on the Philippines to immediately end all violence and human rights violations targeting suspected drug offenders, including unlawful killings, arbitrary arrests, acts of torture and other abuses, and to disband private and state-backed paramilitary groups involved in the war on drugs.

Furthermore, Parliament condemned all threats, harassment, intimidation and violence against those seeking to expose allegations of extrajudicial killings and other human rights abuses in the country. Members hope to see free and fair elections leading to a new democratic government which upholds human rights, investigates and prosecutes past human rights violations. It called on Philippines to reverse the decision which withdrew it from the Rome Statute.

Parliament also condemned President Duterte’s demeaning, sexist and misogynist statements about women and people who identify as belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community and urged him to refrain from inciting violence against them.

The Government of the Philippines is urged to:

- end the red-tagging of organisations and individuals to communist groups by the authorities including human rights and environmental defenders, journalists, trade union activists and church and humanitarian workers;

- end the political harassment of Senator Leila De Lima, to order her immediate and unconditional release, and to prosecute in fair trials those found to be responsible for her arbitrary detention and other human rights violations committed against her, such as gender-based attacks and violations of her right to due process;

- immediately carry out impartial, transparent, independent and meaningful investigations into all extrajudicial killings;

- ensure investigations into and prosecutions of all senior police and politicians where there is reasonable suspicion that they have direct and/or command or superior responsibility for crimes under international law and other serious violations and abuses of human rights amend or repeal legislation which continues to discriminate against women and to promote and protect women's rights;

- step up their efforts to ensure fair and free elections and a non-toxic environment for on- and offline campaigning.

Lastly, Member States are called on to **refrain from all exports of arms**, surveillance technology and other equipment that can be used for internal repression by the Philippine authorities.