EU-Thailand Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

2022/0252M(NLE) - 14/06/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 552 votes to 36, with 24 abstentions, a non-legislative resolution on the draft Council decision on the conclusion, on behalf of the Union, of the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Kingdom of Thailand, of the other part.

EU engagement in the Indo-Pacific region

Members highlighted the fact that Thailand is an important partner in the Indo-Pacific region, which has become one of the EU's geopolitical priorities. The EU's new Indo-Pacific strategy needs to be implemented swiftly to give the EU's partners in the region the opportunity to address common challenges together, to defend the rules-based international order and to stand up for shared EU-ASEAN values and principles.

Parliament reiterated the political significance of strong bilateral relations, based on shared values and principles, between ASEAN and the EU in general, and between Thailand and the EU in particular. It recalled its call for the swift implementation of the EU Global Gateway strategy in coordination with the Indo-Pacific strategy and welcomed the announcement of a EUR 10 billion financial package to accelerate infrastructure investments in ASEAN countries with the aim of building a new, economically sustainable partnership, in particular with regard to the green transition and sustainable connectivity.

EU-Thailand PCA

Parliament welcomed the conclusion of the PCA, a **comprehensive and modern agreement** which will make it possible to move towards new models of sustainable growth and development and better respond to current challenges in a wide number of policy areas, including the environment, energy, climate change, transport, science and technology, trade, employment and social affairs, human rights, education, agriculture, migration, culture, nuclear non-proliferation, counterterrorism, and the fight against corruption and organised crime.

Members called for **visa-free travel** to Thailand for all EU citizens and supported working towards a visa-free regime for travel to the EU for Thai citizens.

Given that Thailand is the ninth country in the world most affected by climate change, Parliament stressed the parties' common objective of strengthening the global response to climate change and its impact and enhancing cooperation on policies to help mitigate climate change in accordance with the Paris Agreement.

The resolution highlighted that Thailand faces **increasing environmental degradation** in many regions, including the loss of biodiversity and declining wildlife populations, deforestation, desertification, water scarcity, and air and water pollution. Cooperation is needed to address these challenges.

Moreover, Parliament considered that the EU should maintain its commitment to **sustainable fishing** in the Indo-Pacific and strengthen its cooperation with Thailand on combating overfishing, overcapacity and IUU fishing in the Indo-Pacific. The Commission is urged to include canned fish and seafood as 'sensitive products' for the purposes of possible trade negotiations with Thailand.

The Thai authorities are urged to:

- step up their implementation efforts, as well as efforts to combat gender-based violence and empower women and girls, particularly migrant women, women from rural areas and women belonging to minorities;

- respect the role of civil society organisations, human rights defenders, democracy defenders, civil society activists, journalists and others, to ensure freedom of expression and assembly;

- abide by its international obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and swiftly ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;

- immediately put a halt to the deportations of ethnic **Rohingya and Uyghurs** and other asylum seekers, which are in blatant violation of fundamental international obligations that are binding on Thailand, particularly the principle of non-refoulement;

- ratify ILO Conventions Nos 87, 98 and 155, to effectively guarantee workers' rights to organise and strike and to recognise the same rights for all workers, regardless of their country of origin;

- take concrete steps towards the abolition of the death penalty.