Resolution on Burma/Myanmar/ASEM

2004/2581(RSP) - 16/09/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Burma/ASEM.

The resolution had been tabled by the PES, EPP-ED, GUE/NGL, Greens/ALE, and ALDE groups.

Parliament **deplores the decision of the EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs to allow the participation of Burma** at the ASEM V Summit which be held from 8 to 9 October 2004 in Hanoi, and to delay taking further action until after the summit has taken place. It notes that at their informal meeting on 3 September 2004 the Foreign Ministers of the 25 European Union countries reached an agreement accepting Burma's participation at the next ASEM Summit, but at a level below head of state/government. The Council decided that if the Burmese Government had not fulfilled the following three conditions by the time of the ASEM V Summit: the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders; allowing the NLD to operate freely; and an invitation to the NLD and other political parties to participate freely in the National Convention, it would take further action at its subsequent session on 11 October.

Parliament considers that the decision of the EU Foreign Affairs Ministers could give a signal to the Burmese regime that the EU attaches a lessening priority to the release of Aung San Suu Kyi, thereby encouraging it to take further harsh measures against the NLD and its leaders. It continues to insist that **Burma should not attend the ASEM V Summit, and that Burma should not become a member of ASEM,** until irreversible political change towards democracy takes place in that country. Members demand the immediate release of and **full freedom of movement and expression for Aung San Suu Kyi** and other leading NLD members as well as other political prisoners held by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). They also call for all NLD offices currently closed to be allowed to reopen, and for the SPDC to initiate a meaningful dialogue with the NLD and ethnic groups to bring about a return to democracy and respect for human rights, including ethnic minorities' rights in Burma. Parliament insists that the **SPDC relinquish its grip on power and that the results of the last elections be fully respected,** that the National Convention procedures be modified and that a time- frame for its completion be established. It calls on the ASEAN states to join the EU in exerting greater pressure on the SPDC to release Aung San Suu Kyi and other detained NLD members immediately, and to take meaningful steps to exercise their influence over the Burmese regime so as to bring about change for the better in Burma.

With regard to **EU policy**, Parliament insists that the EU's Common Policy on Burma should be strengthened immediately and, in addition to the measures proposed by the Council, should also ban the import of goods and services from enterprises owned by the military, military personnel and their associates and ban the import of strategically important goods from sectors of the economy under monopoly, such as gems and timber, and furthermore calls on travel agencies and independent tour operators in the EU to stop promoting and selling tourist visits to Burma. It calls for an EU envoy to be appointed to work towards securing the release of Aung San Suu Kyi and freedom for the NLD.

Following the NLD’s call for investment sanctions against Burma, Parliament wants the UN to impose targeted sanctions on Burma, on the UN Security Council to address the situation in Burma as a matter of urgency, and on UN Envoy Razali to be given unrestricted access to Aung San Suu Kyi.