Resolution on trafficking of women and children in Cambodia

2005/2505(RSP) - 13/01/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted by 107 votes to 0, with 1 abstention, a resolution on the trafficking of women and children in Cambodia.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, Greens /EFA, GUE/NGL and UEN groups.

The resolution recalls that the attack on the Srey Khan Center of the Association 'Agir Pour les Femmes en Situation Précaire' (AFESIP), where 91 women and young girls were staying, 83 of whom had been freed the day before by officials working for the Department for Trafficking in Human Beings and Juvenile Protection from a hotel where prostitution was being practised. It also recalls the death threats received by Somaly Mam, an activist working for children forced into prostitution and for whom the Cambodian government cannot guarantee protection.

Parliament stresses its preoccupation with child prostitution in Cambodia and with the trafficking in human beings both to and from Cambodia, with the objective of using them for forced labour, prostitution and begging and in illegal adoptions. It condemns the attack of 8 December 2004 on the AFESIP shelter for victims of human trafficking in Phnom Penh and the abduction of 91 women and girls, some of them minors. It also condemns the sex tourism industry in Cambodia and the other countries where it occurs, and requests that EU Member States enact and apply the necessary legislation needed to bring to justice all those involved in sex tourism with minors.

MEPs insist that the Commission should:

- take into account the rights of children and women who are victims of trafficking in the programming of its human rights policy, within the framework of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights;

- support human rights organisations in Cambodia, especially those dedicated to the protection of victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

The Government and the Cambodian authorities are called upon to:

- ratify the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and the UN Convention against Organised Crime;
- guarantee the safety of child protection organisations and their workers, especially for those organisations working to help trafficking and sexual exploitation victims;
- guarantee the safety of Somaly Mam, whose life is in danger.

Parliament denounces the sexual exploitation of minors as a crime *'erga omnes'* and an attack on the fundamental rights of children which must be fought at all levels. It calls on the EU Member States to act together in the fight against organised crime and trafficking in human beings, especially trafficking in minors.