

Resolution on breaches of human rights in China, in particular as regards freedom of religion

2005/2601(RSP) - 08/09/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted by 78 votes to 5 with 1 abstention a resolution on religious freedom in China.

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

Well aware that religious persecution in China is a general problem, Parliament calls on the Chinese Government to put an end to religious repression and to ensure that it respects international standards of human rights as well as religious rights and guarantees democracy, freedom of expression, freedom of association, freedom of the media and political and religious freedom in China.

It notes that, despite the fact that the Chinese Constitution provides for freedom of religious belief, the authorities seek in reality to restrict religious practice to government-sanctioned organisations and registered places of worship, and to control the growth and the activities of religious groups. Members urge the Chinese Government to **abolish the difference between approved and non-approved worship communities**, as has been suggested by the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief since 1994. They also urge the Chinese Government to implement Article 36 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China and to ratify and implement the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Parliament calls on the Commission and the Council to make it clear to the Chinese authorities that a genuine partnership can only develop when shared values are fully respected and put into practice. It urges the Commission, the Council and the Member States to raise specifically the issue of the **persecution of Chinese Christians**, and to obtain from the Chinese Government information about the situation of certain members of the Chinese Catholic community and the China for Christ Church who are named in the resolution and the unconditional release of all Chinese Catholics and Chinese Christians incarcerated on account of their religious convictions and the immediate cessation of all kinds of violence towards them.

Lastly, Parliament welcomes the existence of **EU-China human rights structured dialogue**, but expresses disappointment at the lack of substantial results coming from this dialogue. It invites the Council and the Commission to raise this issue of concern during the forthcoming EU-China human rights session, as part of a thorough assessment of the effectiveness of the structured dialogue.