Resolution on the defence of multi-ethnicity in Vojvodina, Serbia and Montenegro

2005/2615(RSP) - 29/09/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted by 88 votes to 0 with 2 abstentions a resolution on the defence of multi-ethnicity in Vojvodina.

The resolution had been tabled by the IND/DEM, Greens/ALE, EPP-ED, ALDE, UEN, PES and GUE /NGL groups. It expresses its **deep concern at the repeated breaches of human rights** and the lack of law and order in the province of Vojvodina, which continue to be reported by political forces and civil society, including harassment and physical assault of non-ethnic Serbs and threats against ethnic Hungarian political leaders. Parliament states that central and local authorities in Serbia have failed to improve respect for human and minority rights or to bring to justice the perpetrators of violent acts and acts of harassment. It calls on the authorities in the Republic of Serbia and the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro to acknowledge these violent acts as criminal acts in breach of the laws in force, and insists on the importance of immediate and effective action, so that similar offences are prevented in the future and their effects are not left unremedied. Members refer to the fact that no real progress has been made in reversing the deterioration in the conditions for national and ethnic minorities in Vojvodina, thereby jeopardising their future in the region.

Parliament intends to continue monitoring the situation in Vojvodina, in particular with regard to the content and principles of the Stability and Association Agreement, and requests regular consultations with the Commission and Council during this procedure. It reaffirms its **willingness to use its budgetary powers** both to assist and bring pressure to bear on Serbia-Montenegro, in order to encourage respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms, including minority rights.

The resolution urges the Commission, the Council and the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy to monitor closely developments in Vojvodina, paying closer attention to the high security risk which the harassment of minorities in Vojvodina represents, and calls, therefore, for **EU monitors (EUMM) to be sent to the province.**

Members remind the Government of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro and the Government of Serbia that the principles of liberty, democracy, and respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the founding elements of the Stabilisation and Association process and the rule of law are prerequisites for Parliament's assent to the conclusion of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement and any future partnership with the EU in general. It calls on the authorities in the Republic of Serbia and the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro to reinstate the autonomy Vojvodina enjoyed until 1990 and to reinstate the real powers of the regional parliament of Vojvodina in the field of education and the media, so as to enable the regional parliament to develop adequate policies in this multi-ethnic region.