Basic information

2008/2605(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on the situation in China after the earthquake and before the Olympic Games **Subject** 3.70.11 Natural disasters, Solidarity Fund 4.10.13 Sport 6.10.04 Third-country political situation, local and regional conflicts **Geographical area** China	

Key players

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
External Relations	FERRERO-WALDNER Benita

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
09/07/2008	Debate in Parliament		Summary
10/07/2008	Decision by Parliament	T6-0362/2008	Summary
10/07/2008	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2008/2605(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Resolution on statement
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 136-p2
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Motion for a resolution		B6-0340/2008	09/07/2008	
Motion for a resolution		B6-0341/2008	09/07/2008	

Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T6-0362/2008	10/07/2008	Summary

Resolution on the situation in China after the earthquake and before the Olympic Games

2008/2605(RSP) - 10/07/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 9 July 2008, the European Parliament adopted by 439 votes in favour to 51 against with 139 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in China after the earthquake and before the Olympic Games. The resolution had been tabled for consideration in plenary by the EPP-ED, PES, and UEN groups.

Parliament began by expressing satisfaction at the developments in EU-China relations, the sectoral dialogues and the closer cooperation on various globalised issues. It calls on the Chinese authorities to bear in mind that earthquake warnings constitute one benchmark of the development of a country, stressing the vital importance of responding immediately to any warning that the scientific community can give the authorities in the unlikely but possible situation of another natural disaster in China.

Members welcome the resumption of contacts, after the events of March 2008 in Lhasa, between the representatives of the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities. The two parties are encouraged to intensify these contacts so as to establish the bases for mutual trust, without which it will be impossible to arrive at a mutually acceptable political solution.

Parliament regrets that while there has been major progress in relations with China as regards trade and economics, that progress has not been accompanied by substantial achievements as regards issues relating to human rights and democracy. It deplores the fact that China's human rights record remains a matter of concern owing to widespread and systematic human rights abuses. Members recall the commitments to human rights made by China when the country won its bid to host the Olympic Games. They condemn China's frequent use of the death penalty and call on the Chinese authorities to establish a moratorium on executions. China must abide by the public commitments which it made with regard to human rights and minority rights, democracy and the rule of law and which the IOC announced when it decided to allow China to organise the Olympic Games.

The resolution deplores the fact that no international calls have succeed in stopping the Chinese authorities from pursuing their follow-up to the riots of 14 March 2008 in Tibet, with participants in the protest in Lhasa still being traced, detained and arbitrarily arrested. Their families are given no information as to their whereabouts, although this is required by Chinese law. The Chinese authorities must halt their "patriotic re-education" campaign, which has been intensified since the beginning of April, during the Olympic Games in the name of the long-established "Olympic Truce".

Parliament goes on to note with satisfaction that China rapidly agreed to accept the assistance of the international community in helping the victims of the earthquake in the Sichuan region and facilitating the operation of voluntary humanitarian aid organisations in distributing aid. It stresses the importance of the support of the European Union, of its Member States and of the international community for the reconstruction phase in the affected region.

The resolution urges the Chinese authorities to take this historic opportunity to demonstrate to the world that the granting of the Olympic Games to Beijing has provided a unique chance to improve their human rights record by displaying clemency to all political prisoners and human rights activists in gaol, including those in gaol in Tibet following the uprising of March 2008 (except, of course, for perpetrators of violent crimes). It calls, moreover, on the Chinese authorities to stop discrimination against rural migrants and ethnic minorities and to refrain from harassing trade-union activists, lawyers and journalists when they denounce violations of fundamental freedoms. Parliament reiterates its conviction that the imprisonment of such people is against the universal and accepted spirit of the ius gentium (law of nations).