Resolution on Cambodia, notably the case of Kem Sokha

2018/2842(RSP) - 13/09/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Cambodia, notably the case of Kem Sokha.

The resolution was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, Greens/EFA, and EFDD groups.

Members called for all charges against Kem Sokha, the President of the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), to be dropped and for his immediate release. Members cited fears about the condition of Kem Sokhas health, and called on the Cambodian authorities to allow him to receive appropriate medical treatment.

Cambodian elections: noting that the ruling Cambodian Peoples Party (CPP) obtained 100 % of the contested seats in the National Assembly election held on 29 July 2018 and the Cambodian Supreme Court had announced the dissolution of the CNRP, Parliament expressed its conviction that the elections in Cambodia cannot be considered to be free and fair and were widely condemned by the international community. The elections were de facto non-competitive and failed to meet minimum international standards for democratic elections. Parliament supported the decision to suspend EU electoral support to Cambodia and urged the Cambodian Government to engage in reforms in order to advance democracy and apply internationally recognised minimum standards, including the organisation of multiparty elections, the establishment of a genuinely independent National Election Committee and the involvement of NGOs and the independent media in election monitoring and reporting.

Human rights: Members reminded the Cambodian Government that it must fulfil its obligations and commitments in relation to the democratic principles and fundamental human rights, which are an essential component of the EU-Cambodia Cooperation Agreement. The Cambodian Government was called upon to put an end to all forms of harassment, abuse and politically motivated criminal charges against members of the political opposition, human rights defenders, trade unionists, land rights activists, and journalists, among others.

Trade with the EU: recalling that Cambodia benefits from the most favourable regime available under the EUs Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP), namely the Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme, Members called on the Commission to consider possible consequences in the context of the trade preferences Cambodia enjoys, including launching an investigation under the mechanisms provided for in the framework of EBA. They noted that the EU has allocated up to EUR 410 million to Cambodia for development cooperation for the financial period 2014-2020, of which EUR 10 million is for supporting the electoral reform process in Cambodia and is currently suspended. Parliament welcomed the recent EU EBA fact?finding mission to Cambodia and invites the Commission to report the conclusions to Parliament as soon as possible.

Members called on the EEAS and the Commission to closely monitor the situation in Cambodia and to:

- compile a list of individuals responsible for the dissolution of the opposition and other serious human rights violations in Cambodia with a view to imposing possible visa restrictions and asset freezes on them;
- take action and lead the efforts at the forthcoming 39th session of the UN Human Rights Council towards the adoption of a strong resolution addressing the human rights situation in Cambodia.

Lastly, Parliament called on the Cambodian Government to renew the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Cambodia upon its expiry on 31 December 2018.