

P6_TA(2005)0012

Trafficking of women and children in Cambodia

European Parliament resolution on trafficking of women and children in Cambodia

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Cambodia, and in particular those of 13 March 2003¹ and 12 February 2004²,
 - having regard to the cooperation agreement between the European Community and the Kingdom of Cambodia³, which entered in force on 1 November 1999,
 - having regard to the 2000-2003 EC-Cambodia Strategy Document and the 2005-2006 National Indicative Programme,
 - having regard to the statement made by the Local Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the EU Heads of Missions in Phnom Penh on the attack on a shelter for victims of human trafficking operated by the Association 'Agir Pour les Femmes en Situation Précaire' (AFESIP),
 - having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratified by Cambodia and by all EU Member States,
 - having regard to the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and the UN Convention against Organised Crime,
 - having regard to the EU guidelines on the protection of human rights activists approved by the European Council in July 2004,
 - having regard to the agreement between UN and Cambodia on a budget for a special Cambodia war crimes tribunal,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. having regard to the attack on the Srey Khan Center of the AFESIP Association 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,
- B. whereas the fate of these 91 women and girls is unknown,

¹ OJ C 61 E, 10.3.2004, p. 417.

² P5_TA(2004)0101.

³ OJ L 269, 19.10.1999, p.18.

- C. whereas eight people were arrested during the police operation and freed the following day,
- D. having regard to the death threats received by Somaly Mam, an activist working for children forced into prostitution and for whom the Cambodian government cannot guarantee protection,
- E. whereas trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation are a form of modern day slavery and constitute flagrant violations of fundamental human rights carried out by organised criminal networks operating across international borders; whereas this is a lucrative business for the traffickers,
- F. whereas trafficking in human beings is increasing because of poverty, unemployment, the vulnerability of women and children, deteriorating social conditions in the countries of origin, the high profits and low risks experienced by traffickers, and the demand for women and children for purposes of prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation,
- G. whereas efforts still need to be made in the fight against organised crime and trafficking in human beings,
- H. whereas during the 7th Consultative Group (CG) meeting on Cambodia of 6 and 7 December 2004 participants agreed on a series of common indicators, including enacting domestic violence and anti-trafficking laws, to help the government of Cambodia and development partners alike to monitor performance in the coming year,
- I. considering the creation of an Interministerial Committee by the government of Cambodia which will investigate the attack on the AFESIP centre,
 - 1. 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;
 - 2. 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;
 - 3. Recalls the principles of the Charter of Human Rights and especially the rights of girls, in the case of sexual exploitation of minors in Asia and in the rest of the world;
 - 4. 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;
 - 5. 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;
 - 6. Insists that the Commission takes 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;

7. Requests that the Commission supports human rights organisations in Cambodia, especially those dedicated to the protection of victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation;
8. Welcomes the decision of the Government of Cambodia to establish an interministerial committee including representatives of the foreign missions and national and international non-governmental organisations, as observers to witness, further investigate and personally interview the women concerned;
9. Is confident of a positive and fair result from the Interministerial Committee which has just been set up, and recognises that the Cambodian authorities have made efforts to combat trafficking in women and children; underlines, however, the need to increase the number of prosecutions and convictions of traffickers so to put an end to trafficking in women and child prostitution;
10. Calls on the Cambodian authorities to guarantee the safety of child protection organisations and their workers, especially for those organisations working to help trafficking and sexual exploitation victims;
11. Calls on the Cambodian authorities to guarantee the safety of Somaly Mam, whose life is in danger;
12. Calls on the Government of Cambodia to ratify the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, and the UN Convention against Organised Crime;
13. Calls on the EU Member States to act together in the fight against organised crime and trafficking in human beings, especially trafficking in minors;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Government of Cambodia, and the Governments of the ASEAN Member States.