Annual Report on Human Rights in the World 2005 and the EU's policy on the matter


The European Parliament,
— having regard to the seventh EU Annual Report on Human Rights (2005) (\(^1\)),
— having regard to Articles 3, 6, 11, 13 and 19 of the Treaty on European Union and Articles 177 and 300 of the EC Treaty,
— having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to all relevant international human rights instruments (\(^2\)),
— having regard to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol,
— having regard to the United Nations Charter,
— having regard to the entry into force on 1 July 2002 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and to its resolutions related to the ICC (\(^3\)),
— having regard to the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and the 2005 Action Plan on trafficking in human beings, developed and adopted by the Council and the Commission in accordance with the Hague Programme,
— having regard to Protocol No 13 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances,
— having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (\(^4\)),
— having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (\(^5\)) and its recent 2005 revision (\(^6\)),
— having regard to its previous resolutions on human rights in the world,
— having regard to its resolution of 24 February 2005 on the EU's priorities and recommendations for the 61st session of the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva (14 March to 22 April 2005) (\(^7\)),
— having regard to its resolution of 14 February 2006 on the human rights and democracy clause in European Union agreements (\(^8\)),
— having regard to all urgency human rights resolutions adopted by it,
— having regard to the Commission Communication entitled 'Tenth Anniversary of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership: A work programme to meet the challenges of the next five years' (COM(2005)0139),
— having regard to the resolutions of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly, and particularly that voted on 21 November 2005 in Rabat,
— having regard to its resolution of 17 November 2005 on the Council's Sixth Annual Report on the European Union's Code of Conduct on Arms Exports (\(^9\)),
— having regard to the conclusions of the EU Human Rights Discussion Forum, which took place in December 2005,

\(^{1}\) Council document 12416/05.
\(^{2}\) For all relevant basic texts, please consult the table annexed to report A6-0158/2006 of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.
\(^{9}\) Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2005)0436.
having regard to the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,

— having regard to Rule 45 of its Rules of Procedure,

— having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (A6-0158/2006),

A. whereas the EU Annual Report on Human Rights 2005 is a general overview of activities of the European Union institutions regarding human rights inside and outside the European Union,

B. whereas this resolution sets out to examine, evaluate and, where appropriate, offer constructive criticism of the human rights activities of the Commission, the Council and the overall activities of the Parliament,

1. Welcomes the fact that the EU is playing an increasingly active role on the world stage to improve human rights globally; considers that the last enlargement of the EU to 25 Member States with 457 million inhabitants (soon to be supplemented by the accession of Bulgaria and Romania) has increased the global importance of the EU and has thus given it greater weight in international human rights politics;

2. Considers that, despite vigorous activities to advocate the promotion of human rights, such efforts are largely confined to specialists and to one-off representations, and that there is a general failure by the European Union systematically and continuously to address human rights concerns with respect to third countries and to mainstream human rights policy with respect to the Union's trade, development and other external policies vis-à-vis such countries;

3. Emphasises the need for a common, consistent and transparent policy implemented by all Member States in their bilateral relations with third countries having poor human rights records, and calls upon the Member States to conduct their bilateral contacts with those countries in compliance with the common EU position;

4. Considers it essential that the European Union should establish an integrated framework of rules and institutions to confer binding force on the Charter of Fundamental Rights, ensure compliance with the system provided for in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and form the basis of a single European front in the battle for a worldwide culture of rights; calls on European political institutions to mobilise their energies in support of those objectives;

The Council's Annual Report

5. Underlines the importance of the EU Annual Report on Human Rights in raising the visibility of human rights issues in general;

6. Strongly welcomes the Council's public presentation of the 2005 Report at the December 2005 plenary, in parallel with Parliament's award of its annual Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to three joint winners, namely Ladies in White, Reporters without Borders and Hauwa Ibrahim; urges the continuation of this practice in the future so that the December European Parliament plenary session becomes a focal point for the EU's activities in the area of human rights;

7. Welcomes the increased clarity and conciseness of the Report; asks the Council, however, to further focus on the assessment of the EU instruments and initiatives in third countries, to deal with the results achieved in this matter and to include impact studies on the activities reported while defining a clear methodology for such work, as well as strategic analyses of key goals for the forthcoming year;

8. Considers it a positive development that the Council's report for the first time endeavours to do justice to the activities of the European Parliament, but invites the future Finnish Presidency in its drafting of the Eighth EU Annual Report on Human Rights to consult actively with the European Parliament, to report on the way that Parliament's resolutions have been taken into account by the Council and the Commission, and to include, as a fundamental element, a role for the Parliament in the drafting of the report in some suitable form so that the final version will be a real attempt to reflect the views of the Council, the Commission and the Parliament; takes the view that the European Parliament must continue to issue its own report in order to assess the EU's human rights policy and to exercise parliamentary control;
9. Suggests that a key priority for the Council in future human rights reports should be the analysis and implementation of the EU's guidelines, as well as the production of impact assessments for each of the guidelines, weighing up their effectiveness in forging change in third countries;

10. Asks that future annual reports on human rights should analyse how human rights are dealt with within the external dimension of other EU policies, such as development and trade, including by reporting on the extent to which human rights and democracy clauses have been utilised in the EU’s relationships with third countries; calls in addition, in this connection, for future annual reports on human rights to assess actual compliance with the human rights and democracy clause in EU agreements, as endorsed by Parliament in its abovementioned resolution of 14 February 2006;

**European Union activities during the two Presidencies**

11. Welcomes the cooperation-focused approach of the Luxembourg and UK Presidencies and looks forward to seeing this continue during the Austrian and Finnish Presidencies through the adoption of a joint annual programme; considers that such cooperation should increase the coordination and consistency of EU action and hopes that this trend will continue and be further enhanced in the future;

12. Welcomes the efforts and commitment of the Luxembourg and UK Presidencies to develop a methodology and criteria for more effective implementation of the EU guidelines, including demarches to third countries regarding individual cases, public statements and declarations; and emphasises the importance of setting up a special mechanism for a systematic compilation of practices at local level by the heads of EU missions and Commission delegations, in order to identify examples of 'best and bad practices' of implementation on the ground, which could permit an assessment of local implementation;

13. Welcomes the initiatives taken by the Luxembourg Presidency to overcome the problem of limited resources through burden-sharing, early negotiations, the pooling of resources and informal troikas with other Member States on particular issues; calls on the Council to develop this approach during other Presidencies;

14. Appreciates the approach of the UK Presidency regarding the death penalty, in line with the EU Guidelines on the Death Penalty, undertaking demarches in countries where either a moratorium on the death penalty was in danger of being de jure or de facto lifted or where internal steps aimed at introducing a moratorium were under consideration; asks the Austrian Presidency and all future Presidencies to follow this example to demarche such countries regularly; requests all Presidencies to follow up on demarches previously carried out, as appropriate; calls on the Commission to instruct its delegations in third countries which have the death penalty to support the Council's moves to secure a moratorium and to redouble their efforts in cases of European citizens under sentence of death; welcomes the resolution adopted by the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly in Rabat on 21 November 2005, which calls on the Barcelona Process partner countries to support the moratorium on the death penalty;

15. Welcomes the priority given to compliance with human rights obligations as part of the steps taken during the UK Presidency to open accession negotiations with Turkey and Croatia, to grant the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia candidate-country status and to open negotiations for Stabilisation and Association Agreements with Serbia-Montenegro and Bosnia-Herzegovina; asks the Commission to ensure that real progress is made by the candidate countries in the field of the human rights, and in particular regarding protection of minorities, religious freedom and freedom of expression, displaced and refugee populations, people with mental health problems and/or intellectual disabilities and cooperation with international justice, in accordance with European principles and the Community acquis; urges the Council and the Commission to include compliance with UN Conventions in contractual relationships with candidate countries and countries in the Stabilisation and Association process as a key issue; underlines the importance of the association and accession process in providing the impetus to carry out necessary human rights reforms;
16. Notes with approval that combating human trafficking is regarded as a priority of the Council’s Presidencies; urges the EU to adopt an integrated, human rights-centred approach to tackling this growing phenomenon;

17. Welcomes the choice of freedom of expression as a major human rights theme during the UK Presidency; is concerned at the high number of journalists worldwide, and in particular in China, Belarus, Cuba and North Korea, being convicted for alleged defamation of public officials or politicians; asks the Council to advocate a worldwide moratorium on such imprisonment of journalists as a first step; stresses, however, that freedom of expression does not exclude mutual respect and understanding between different civilisations;

18. Expresses dismay at the failure of the UK Presidency to organise a third meeting of the EU Network of contact points for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes (1), which represents an invaluable means of strengthening cooperation among EU Member States in investigations and prosecutions of international crimes at national level;

Performance of Council and Commission activities in the area of human rights in international fora

19. Welcomes the active involvement of the EU and its Member States on human rights issues in a variety of international fora in 2005, including the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), the UN General Assembly, the Ministerial Council of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe and the WTO Ministerial Conference;

20. Appreciates the result-oriented approach of the EU Presidency and the Council in the 61st session of the UNCHR; in this context, welcomes the key role played by the EU in securing critical and constructive resolutions on human rights in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal, North Korea, Sudan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, and on human rights and counter-terrorism and the appointment of Special Rapporteurs to develop principles and guidelines on discrimination based on work and descent; equally welcomes the support given to the appointment of a Special Representative to contribute to the strengthening of standards on human rights at work;

21. Reminds the Council, however, of its abovementioned resolution of 24 February 2005, which called on the EU to present resolutions on a certain number of priority issues; regrets, in particular, the EU’s refusal to sponsor resolutions on human rights abuses in China, Zimbabwe and Chechnya; recalls, in this regard, the commitments entered into by the Council in the context of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Dialogues, which clearly state that a human rights dialogue with a third country cannot prevent the Council from sponsoring a resolution on that specific country in the UN Human Rights Council; in this context, also takes account of the statement in the 2005 Report that the African group in particular has not been cooperative when discussing the human rights situation in specific African countries during the proceedings of the UN General Assembly’s Third Committee; therefore calls on the Commission and the Council to use all means at their disposal to persuade the African group to cooperate with the UN General Assembly in the future by conducting dialogue and providing information on the African countries concerned, especially those with whom ACP-EU cooperation is suspended under Article 96 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement or with whom political dialogue is conducted under Article 8 thereof; suggests that the European Parliament should in future, when submitting its proposals for resolutions to the Council, limit them to those relating to key countries of concern, and that it should support more strongly the Council’s work in this regard;

22. Calls on the Council and the Commission to make significant efforts to continuously link their discussions conducted in international fora with the European Union’s bilateral political dialogues, development and trade policy, and to avoid the current situation in which countries opposing EU human rights initiatives in international fora can do so with little expectation that they will suffer any adverse consequences in respect of bilateral relations;

23. Specifically reminds the Council and the Commission that most human rights abuses would be impossible in countries with stronger traditions of freedom of speech and press freedom; therefore calls on the Council and the Commission to emphasise this key point as strongly as possible in all political dialogues, as in the case of development and trade policy;

24. Welcomes the Council's continued support for the establishment of a strong, forceful and effective UN Human Rights Council, with the following essential characteristics: it must be a standing body with a sufficient number of sessions of adequate length to enable it to properly perform its mandate, it must be capable of responding to urgent situations, the system of Special Procedures must be retained and the Committee of NGOs should be reformed so as to permit a strong level of independent NGO participation; asks the Council to continue to take action to set standards for membership of the new UN Human Rights Council, including election procedures, involving direct and individual votes by an absolute majority of members, which seek to guarantee the credibility and efficacy of the future body; in this regard, is concerned that countries with a poor human rights record have been elected as members of the UN Human Rights Council, and therefore stresses the importance of establishing a universal 'peer review' with the task of examining the human rights situation in all countries and monitoring the implementation of international conventions and standards; regrets that during the latter months of 2005 EU Member States appear to have been outmanoeuvred in the negotiations by a small group of UN members composed of countries which themselves have suspect human rights records; nevertheless welcomes the final agreement secured in New York and looks forward to a strong and effective EU representation in the agreed UN Human Rights Council;

25. Calls on the Council and the Commission to systematically oppose the conferment of the presidency of the UN Human Rights Council on countries which fail to respect human rights;

26. Calls for continued support from the Council and the Commission for the speedy agreement of the proposed UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; welcomes the outcome of the 7th Ad Hoc Committee session including agreement on strengthening the draft text in relation to violence against disabled people, the human rights of people with complex dependence needs and the right of deaf people to use sign language; calls on the Member States, the Council and the Commission to support a further strengthening of the existing draft text in relation to the involuntary treatment of people with disabilities and in respect of its implementation; calls for support for current efforts regarding international cooperation aimed at supporting disabled people in developing countries, and for a strong and independent monitoring and enforcement mechanism capable of receiving and handling individual complaints;

27. In general, considers that EU activities in the UN with respect to human rights are too introverted; asks the Council to endeavour to speed up the consultation process so as to allow more time for consultation with non-EU partners; asks the Council to consider having its Working Party on Human Rights (COHOM) provide only a negotiation framework to EU representatives present at international fora and to delegate to those representatives authority to make ad hoc decisions as necessary;

28. Welcomes the fact that, in general, at International Labour Organization (ILO) meetings, the EU takes a forceful stance in discussions about trade union rights and other fundamental human rights of workers, including under the Luxembourg Presidency, when, for instance, the EU took a strong position concerning alleged violations of human rights in relation to Colombia's trade unionists, which then in a show of consistency translated into a strong EU statement at the June 2005 Session of the International Labour Conference; in this context, is surprised that it was possible for a country such as Belarus to be elected in June 2005 to the Governing Body of the ILO despite the fact that Belarus is not a democracy with free trade unions and four major EU countries are permanent members of the Governing Body; asks the Council to explain its diplomatic demarches prior to that election and whether it considered opposing Belarus' membership; maintains that it is essential to strengthen the EU-backed special programmes to protect vulnerable sectors in third countries;

29. Congratulates the Council and the Commission for the substantial diplomatic success in achieving the referral by the UN Security Council of the case of Darfur in Sudan to the ICC, as called for in Parliament's resolution of 16 September 2004 (1); however, concerned at the deteriorating security situation in Darfur, urges the international community, the UN, the Council and the Commission to act immediately to stop the violence, while providing substantial support to the African Union as well as a sufficient level of humanitarian aid to the population affected; encourages speedy progress in the prosecution of high-ranking officials

from the military or civilian hierarchy of the Sudanese government for crimes in this regard, in particular the use of rape as a weapon of war; urges the EU to actively support the transition of the present African Union Mission towards a fully-fledged UN peace-keeping mission in order to provide increased security in the region; urges the EU to continue its support for the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the various parties;

30. Calls on the Council and the Commission to continue their vigorous efforts to promote universal ratification of the Rome Statute and the adoption of the implementing legislation relating to the ICC, in conformity with the Council Common Position on the ICC and the Action Plan; calls on the Council and the Commission to redouble their efforts in this regard in their demarches to the United States, a key partner of the EU, notably in the war against terror; requests that each EU Presidency present to Parliament a report concerning actions taken under the Common Position;

31. Welcomes the inclusion, following the recent revision of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, of the promotion and strengthening of peace and international justice, giving due regard to the Rome Statute, as an objective of cooperation between the EU and ACP countries; regrets, therefore, the lack of reference to the ICC in the final UN World Summit outcome document in September 2005; welcomes the fact that references to the ICC have been included in several European Neighbourhood Action Plans, notably those relating to Ukraine and Moldova, and in the draft action plans concerning Azerbaijan, Lebanon, Armenia and Georgia; calls on the EU and its Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the ICC whenever possible;

32. Calls on the US Administration and the Congress to end the delay and ratify the Rome Statute establishing the ICC; considers that no legal exception can be made for the United States on this point; condemns the fact that certain countries, including a number of EU Member States, have entered into ‘bilateral agreements’ with the United States granting de facto impunity to US soldiers;

33. Considers it essential to establish a close relationship between the European Union and the Council of Europe and points to the difficulties still posed for such a relationship: the fact that cooperation is of a technical nature instead of being organised at the political level, the lack of communication between the Commission and Council of Europe bodies, overlapping, and the failure to clarify areas of activity; calls on the Austrian and Finnish presidencies to ensure that the memorandum of understanding now being drafted serves to resolve these difficulties; points out that the relationship between the European Union and the Council of Europe is a vitally important ‘meeting-place’, open also to third countries sympathetic to a culture of human rights, and helps to ensure the success of neighbourhood policies and other special relations founded on partnership;

Scrutinising EU political and human rights dialogues and consultations as well as general political dialogue with third countries

34. Welcomes the fact that the Annual Report makes a balanced assessment of the effectiveness of the EU's human rights dialogues; takes note of the evaluation of those dialogues in 2004, and notes that initial moves are being made by the Council to develop an overview document on human rights dialogues and consultations; is looking forward to receiving this document once it has been adopted; asks the Council, in particular, to closely associate the European Parliament in this work as well as in the process of evaluating the dialogues; in this regard, informs the Council that an own-initiative report will be drafted on the evaluation of human rights dialogues and consultations with third countries;

35. Points to the need for the Union and each and every Member State to act coherently and in accordance with Treaty and acquis obligations where human rights are concerned, in order to avoid inconsistencies that would diminish the moral authority of the Union in the international system;

36. Takes note of the evaluation in the Council's Annual Report of the Human Rights Dialogue with China, with continuing reports of a long list of human rights abuses including political imprisonment, particularly of members of minorities, allegations of torture, widespread use of forced labour, frequent use of the death penalty and systematic repression of freedom of religion, freedom of speech and expression (including in the context of the treatment of people in Tibet) and the freedom of the media including the internet;
regrets that no substantial progress was made on the ratification and implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) or the release of prisoners connected with the 1989 events in Tiananmen Square; regards the Dialogue as a valuable instrument and an important element of the overall strategic dialogue between the EU and China, in which human rights must be treated as a priority concern; calls on the Council and the Commission to undertake strenuous efforts even if these can bear fruit only in the medium term; asks China and the Council to consider improving the Dialogue by the simple practical decision to introduce simultaneous interpretation; is hopeful that innovations such as holding the high-level political dialogue and the legislative seminar directly after one another could lead to stronger synergies; stresses that an increasingly positive trade relationship must be contingent on human rights reforms; asks the Council to invite Members of the European Parliament to attend, just as Chinese parliamentarians have been invited;

37. Condemns the Iranian President's call for Israel to be wiped off the map; expresses its concerns about the human rights situation in Iran and the fact that — due to Iran's lack of engagement — the human rights dialogue with Iran has been interrupted since its last round in June 2004; calls on Iran to re-engage in the dialogue and, drawing on input from the EU, to define benchmarks aimed at real improvements in the field; welcomes the clear statement in the Council conclusions of 12 December 2005 to this effect; calls on the Council to continue, in particular, its demarches towards Iran on individual cases and welcomes in this regard the Austrian Presidency's commitment; expresses its regret at Iran's poor human rights record during the first six months of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's term of office and calls upon the Commission to take all necessary measures within the framework of the European human rights initiative to intensify contacts and cooperation with Iranian civil society and further support democracy and human rights;

38. Expresses concern about serious human rights abuses in Iraq, including in Iraqi prisons; nevertheless welcomes EU support for the new government in Iraq; calls for increased EU engagement in bringing about stability in Iraq and for making the Commission Delegation office fully operational, provided that security concerns can be addressed; calls on the Council and the Commission to support the continuing efforts of the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights to uphold high standards;

39. Welcomes the start of the EU human rights consultations with Russia; supports the Council in its aim of developing those consultations into a frank and genuine EU-Russia Human Rights Dialogue and calls for the involvement of the European Parliament in such a process; calls on the Council to continue urging Russia to agree that European and Russian NGOs be associated with the consultations, given the example of other dialogues on human rights issues; welcomes the Council's debriefing of NGOs on the consultations; however, regrets that there are no systematic consultations with the European Parliament; asks the Council to press Russia to agree to have this dialogue also take place in Russia on an alternating basis and not only when the summits take place in the EU; is concerned that the new Russian NGO legislation will inhibit human rights organisations from carrying out their activities properly whenever respect for human rights is at stake or even from functioning at all; asks the Commission and the Council to raise this issue persistently with Russia, not least in international fora and, in particular, in the Council of Europe, of which Russia takes over the chair of the Committee of Ministers on 19 May 2006; asks the Commission and the Council to raise the issue of extrajudicial killings, disappearances and torture in custody in Chechnya, as well as attacks on human rights defenders engaged in investigating and speaking out about human rights violations in Chechnya;

40. Welcomes the Joint Action Plan adopted at the sixth India-EU Summit, which includes discussions on human rights issues based on the commitment to work together to uphold human rights in a spirit of equality and mutual respect; expects that these discussions will include the rights of minorities; expects that, within this framework, both sides can also discuss the problematic social situation of the Dalits; calls on the Council and the Commission to emulate such dialogue with the governments of other caste-affected countries; welcomes the fact that the Commission and the Council regularly consult Indian NGOs in the framework of an EU-India civil society roundtable; recommends that discussions in the region also tackle the issue of human rights in Kashmir;
Thursday, 18 May 2006

41. Notes the Council conclusions on Colombia adopted on 3 October 2005; recommends that, for future Council conclusions, consultation with civil society and with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights should be a priority and should also involve debate in COHOM; asks the Council to monitor the ongoing impact of the Justice and Peace Law on human rights defenders; notes that the Justice and Peace Law applies to all illegal armed groups in Colombia (not only the United Self-Defence Forces of Colombia (AUC) but also the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN));

42. Calls on the Council and the Commission to consistently raise in all political dialogues with third countries the point that those countries should issue standing invitations to all specialist institutions, Special Rapporteurs and Special Representatives of the United Nations and should submit all outstanding reports to UN treaty bodies;

43. Takes note of the policy instrument of an official EU list of ‘prisoners/detainees of concern’ in the policy vis-à-vis one particular country, as mentioned in the Council’s Annual Report; encourages the Commission and the Council to establish such an official EU list vis-à-vis each third country where there are human rights concerns and to raise that list at each political dialogue meeting; asks the Commission to inform Parliament on all such existing lists;

44. Furthermore, calls on the Council to consider, in the context of its Annual Report each year, adopting the approach taken by governments of some Member States and by certain international NGOs to identify a list of ‘Countries of Particular Concern’ with respect to human rights violations; suggests that those countries should be highlighted in accordance with concrete and transparent criteria, based on the themes of the EU’s Human Rights Guidelines, the treaties and commitments they have entered into and the countries selected by Parliament to be the subject of urgency resolutions, in order to draw greater attention to human rights in the implementation of all EU policies with respect to the countries identified, including the imposition of aid or trade sanctions if those breaches persist; considers that criteria such as the independence of the judiciary and the media, and the status of civil society organisations, are essential from the point of view of assessing the state of human rights;

45. Welcomes the fact that the Council maintained its Common Position on Burma/Myanmar in 2005; takes particular note of the Haval/Tutu report issued in September 2005, which called for the actions of the State Peace and Development Council to be regarded as a risk to international security and for the regime therefore to be referred to the United Nations Security Council; acknowledges the support of EU Member States for the UN Security Council briefing on ongoing violations; notes with concern that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi continues to be kept under house arrest and that the UN Special Rapporteur, whose mandate will end this year, has been denied access to the country since 2003; encourages the EU to take a more proactive role in that country (with particular regard to the resolution on Burma/Myanmar adopted by the European Parliament on 17 November 2005 (1));

46. Welcomes the fact that the Council and the Commission have introduced human rights, democracy, the rule of law and good governance concerns with specific benchmarks in all National Action Plans drawn up in the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP); accepts that, whilst the strength of the Action Plans is that they constitute a binding commitment, this also represent their weakness, because they must be negotiated with the partner country; urges the Council therefore to hold such countries to their commitments and to consider measures to be taken in the event that they do not fulfil them within an agreed timeline; draws specific attention to the weakness of human rights engagements in this respect with Morocco and the Western Sahara, Tunisia, Syria, Israel and the Palestinian Authority, Algeria and Egypt; the Action Plans concerning the latter two countries still being under negotiation; looks forward to examining the reports on the first year of implementation of the first seven action plans and the priorities for the ENP set for 2006; calls, in this spirit, for the setting-up of sub-committees on human rights dealing with, inter alia, individual cases so as to further improve the human rights dialogue with all partner countries;

47. Calls upon the Council and Commission to incorporate the rights of the child in all their actions, in order effectively to combat child labour, with the main focus on teaching and educating children, this being one of the Millennium Development Goals;

General scrutiny of Council and Commission activities

48. Takes note of the information that during the UK Presidency the EU made demarches on 26 individual human rights cases and issued 49 statements on human rights issues;

49. Understands that, especially in the area of human rights, EU activities, such as demarches to third countries, must sometimes be confidential; however, believes that a list of those activities should be included in the Annual Report;

50. Therefore asks the Council and the Commission to develop, together with Parliament, a confidential system whereby selected Members of the European Parliament can be kept informed of the demarches of Member States, the Presidency, the High Representative for CFSP, the Personal Representative on Human Rights, the Special Representatives or the Commission regarding individual human rights cases or situations raised in resolutions of the European Parliament; suggests that such a system could be modelled on the system for informing selected MEPs about classified material regarding security and defence;

51. Welcomes the fact that the General Affairs Council of 12 December 2005 adopted the provision that the Council's updated EU human rights fact sheets are to be made available to all EU institutions, and looks forward to receiving the current version of these as soon as possible (1);

52. Asks the Council to consider making COHOM a working group with Brussels-based representatives; considers that this would allow more time for meetings, better coordination and thus, possibly, a tighter grip on EU human rights policies in the wider sense;

53. Welcomes the establishment of working groups on institution building, administrative reform, governance and human rights between the EU and, respectively, Bangladesh, Laos, and Vietnam; subject to an evaluation of their effectiveness, calls on the Council and the Commission to extend this approach to other third countries such as Cambodia and Nepal;

54. Insists that all human rights instruments, documents and reports including the Annual Reports need to address explicitly discrimination issues including the issues of ethnic minorities, religious freedoms including discriminatory practices towards minority religions, the human rights of women, the rights of children, the rights of indigenous peoples, disabled people including people with intellectual disabilities, and people with all sexual orientations, fully involving their organisations, both within the EU and in third countries where appropriate;

55. Given the gender discrimination which still exists, insists that the protection and promotion of women's rights should be a cross-cutting policy in the European Union human rights agenda;

The Commission’s external assistance programmes

The European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR)

56. Calls on the Commission to take seriously into consideration the position of the European Parliament seeking a specific human rights instrument for 2007-2013; looks forward to receiving the Commission’s communication in this matter;

57. Underlines the importance of the EIDHR as one of the chief instruments which the EU has at its disposal; emphasises in particular the advantage that EIDHR programmes do not require governmental approval in the country of implementation and that the majority of EIDHR funding is available for civil society organisations;

58. Underlines its position that human rights must be streamlined throughout the four external action financial instruments and that a fifth specific instrument for human rights needs to be created in order to complement the thematic programming;

59. Asks the Commission to ensure that the current reform of the Financial Regulation (1) and its accompanying implementing rules are sufficiently far-reaching, so as to reduce the excessive administrative burden and the slowness in delivering funds that currently plague the EIDHR, so as to make it easier for smaller, grassroots NGOs to access and manage funds and in turn to enhance the impact of the EIDHR;

60. Welcomes the conclusions of the evaluation report on the campaign against racism, xenophobia and discrimination, stating that the projects funded under EIDHR target the most marginalised communities not reached by governments and that they show substantial results;

61. Is content that in 2005, the Commission was able to make commitments of over 125 000 000 Euro but is concerned about the possibility that not all the projects contracted in 2005 will be implemented fully and thoroughly;

62. Takes note of the fact that EIDHR funds used for European Union election observation missions in 2005 amounted to more than one fifth of the total and such missions were conducted to 12 countries including Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Liberia, Venezuela and the Palestinian Authority; commends the increasing effectiveness of EU electoral observation activities but believes that this cannot be achieved at the expense of decreasing budget commitments to human rights projects at grassroots level in countries worldwide;

63. Requests the Commission and the Council to systematically follow up the EU election observation missions, closely monitor the post-election situation and take political action if necessary;

64. Takes note that a large proportion (50.9 %) of the total EIDHR funding for projects contracted in 2005 went to large projects organised by theme and only a small proportion (27.68 %) went to micro-projects implemented by Commission Delegations; reiterates that a significant proportion should be devoted to smaller, grassroots projects; calls on the Commission to pay particular attention to those NGOs which play a key role in the promotion of human rights in their countries but which are not legally recognised by the authorities in those countries: regards it as crucial that the Commission should propose, in this regard, a review of the Financial Regulation including the financing of such NGOs;

65. Fully supports the EU contribution to intergovernmental organisations, as these organisations can make fundamental contributions to the promotion of democracy and human rights; considers, however, that this contribution should not be to the detriment of NGOs, but should rather take place through strategic long-term partnerships;

66. Welcomes the fact that the Commission has changed its procedures regarding new calls for proposals for 2006, in that the new calls, which are based on 'concept notes', appear to favour a greater quality assessment of project proposals as a first major criterion;

67. Asks the Commission to make available to Parliament all impact assessment reports regarding projects which are produced by external or internal evaluators, in order to ensure proper scrutiny; asks the Commission to make human rights impact assessments an integral and fully implemented part of all European Union project cycle management, both ex-ante and ex-post, thereby influencing both future policy-making and programmes, as well as the evaluation of ongoing programmes;

**Assistance programmes in general**

68. Considers it necessary to develop substantive mainstreaming of issues related to the respecting of human rights, democratic principles, the rule of law and good governance (as expressed in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement) within actions financed from the European Development Fund (EDF); asks the Commission to produce an annual overview of all the related spending of the EDF across all geographic, regional and thematic programming, in order to increase the visibility of EU activities in this area;

69. Asks the Commission in its policy programming to base development objectives, indicators and plans on agreed, universal international human rights instruments, fully involving human rights organisations from the conception of policies and programmes to the stages of implementation, monitoring and evaluation;

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70. Calls for follow-up to the June 2005 seminar on human rights in relation to EU humanitarian assistance, including by devoting EU resources to justice issues in the wake of massacres and crimes against humanity;

Consideration of the implementation of the human rights and democracy clauses

71. Recalls its abovementioned resolution of 14 February 2006 regarding future EU policy on the application of human rights clauses in all EU agreements, including the setting-up of an effective mechanism for monitoring respect for human rights and the reinforced involvement of the European Parliament in the evaluation and consultation processes in respect of those clauses; is looking forward to the Austrian Presidency responding together with the Commission to Parliament's proposals;

72. Takes note of the fact that, as a matter of course, the EU's 4th-generation agreements with third countries include political dialogue as an essential element of the agreement incorporating human rights and democracy issues; emphasises its determination to strengthen ex-ante control of the newest position in such political dialogues;

73. Agrees with the position expressed in the 2005 Report that the human rights clause is a basis for positive engagement on human rights and democracy issues with third countries; emphasises, however, that this cannot exclude the possibility of the temporary suspension of cooperation on the grounds of a breach of the clause; reiterates its call for a sliding scale of measures and a clear system of sanctions to be used with respect to violations of the human rights clause by third countries, and calls on the Council to consider extending qualified majority voting to the decision to adopt restrictive measures at a future appropriate time; reiterates its demand for a better monitoring and consultation mechanism with respect to the clause, and calls on the Commission and the Council to report annually on breaches of human rights clauses, including those contained in the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, to the Human Rights Subcommittee of the European Parliament;

74. Reiterates its support for the Council's decision of 3 October 2005 to impose sanctions on Uzbekistan following the events in Andizhan on 13 May 2005, when a very substantial number of civilians were shot dead by government security forces and many people were arrested and afterwards put on trial in a process which did not meet international fair trial standards and sought to cover up the truth; takes this as an example of a coherent EU measure against a government which is bound by commitments on human rights and democracy under a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with the EU; regrets that, in the case of Uzbekistan, the sanctions took six months to enact; hopes, however, that this precedent will have the effect of strengthening the human rights clause in all agreements; calls on the Council to roundly condemn the violation of human rights in Turkmenistan;

75. Reiterates its resolution of 15 December 2005 on human rights and freedom of the press in Tunisia and evaluation of the World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunisia (1);

76. Recalls its resolution of 27 October 2005 on human rights in Western Sahara (2); welcomes the release of Sahrawi political prisoners by the Moroccan authorities but condemns the continuation of human rights violations against the Sahrawi population; calls for the Sahrawi population to be protected and fundamental rights particularly freedom of expression, movement and demonstration to be respected; reiterates its call for a just and lasting solution to the conflict in Western Sahara, based on the right to self-determination of the Sahrawi people, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly Resolution 1495(2003);

77. Welcomes the monitoring and review of the Guidelines on Implementation and Evaluation of Restrictive Measures in the framework of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (3);

78. Welcomes the role which the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly plays as a platform for open and transparent discussion on human rights issues, and encourages it to continue its work, thus contributing to the political dialogue envisaged by Article 8 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement;

(2) Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2005)0414.
(3) The Council first approved these guidelines in December 2003. They contain standard wording and common definitions that may be used in legal instruments implementing sanctions. The review took place in December 2005.
Thursday, 18 May 2006

79. Regrets that the human rights clause contained in Article 96 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement is too rarely applied in the event of flagrant violations of human rights in the ACP countries, and urges that political dialogue in the spirit of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement be stepped up;

80. Welcomes, as a very positive example, the EU activities in terms of demarches and declarations following violent repression in Ethiopia in June 2005; is concerned that when similar human rights violations occurred in November 2005, the EU appears not to have followed this up sufficiently; considering the high number of opposition leaders and human rights defenders currently in prison and facing the death penalty, believes that the government of Ethiopia is failing to meet its obligations under Article 8 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, and calls on the Commission and the Council to respond to the European Parliament's call for a coordinated stance in line with Article 96 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement as requested in its abovementioned resolution of 15 December 2005;

81. Expresses its concern at the fact that Eritrea, in spite of serious human rights violations, including arbitrary detentions and the torture of thousands of detainees, is not mentioned in the Council's Annual Report on human rights in 2005; regrets that, in spite of its resolution of 18 November 2004 on the human rights situation in Eritrea (1) in which it condemned the human rights situation in Eritrea and called on the Council and the Commission to open the consultation procedure in accordance with Article 96 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement, little action has been taken by the Council and the Commission on this matter; calls on the Council and the Commission without delay to open the consultation procedure under Article 96 of the ACP-EU Agreement with regard to the human rights situation in Eritrea;

Implementation of EU Human Rights Guidelines

82. Takes note of the first biennial review of the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict under the UK Presidency; is pleased to note, in particular, that the EU's human rights fact sheets, adopted in July 2005, contain a section on children's rights and a specific requirement to report under these Guidelines where appropriate; notes that the consultation with stakeholders and NGOs has been exemplary in the process of drafting the review and recommendations; regrets, however, that the European Parliament was not involved in the process of evaluation of these Guidelines, that the opportunity for a wide-ranging review was not seized and that the outcome document was disappointing in its scope and ambition; therefore requests the Council systematically to associate the European Parliament in the biennial review of these Guidelines, so that it may be aware of Parliament's position and recommendations in this field;

83. Welcomes the commitment of the Austrian Presidency to continue the practice of demarches in respect of all of the EU’s international partners regarding the ratification of international conventions banning the use of torture; asks the Council and the Commission to consider new and innovative ways to implement the Guidelines on Torture; emphasises that, although those Guidelines were adopted as long ago as 2001, they are among the least implemented; in view of the current threats facing the absolute prohibition of torture and ill-treatment in the international context of counter-terrorism; calls on the Council to associate Parliament in the future evaluation process of the Guidelines; in that connection, informs the Council that its sub-committee on Human Rights has asked for a study aimed at optimising the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Torture and improving the means provided for by those Guidelines; recommends to the Austrian and Finnish Presidencies that they conduct demarches on torture in all countries that are signatories to the relevant conventions but appear not to be cooperating; emphasises that the regular presence of the Presidency or the Council Secretariat in the relevant UN Committee on Torture could bring substantial material input into a strategic analysis of which countries to demarche at which point in time; asks the Council to consider whether the European Union could not act more forcefully and more convincingly vis-à-vis third countries if all Member States were to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (2); is also concerned at the allegations of relocation and outsourcing of torture in third countries and calls on the EU to consider the fight against torture as a top priority of its human rights policy, in particular through enhanced implementation of the EU Guidelines and all other EU instruments such as the EIDHR;


On 23 January 2006, the status of signatures and ratifications among the EU-25 was as follows: signed and ratified (only 5 Member States): Denmark, Malta, Poland, Sweden, and the UK (as well as candidate country Croatia); signed (11 Member States): Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Spain (as well as candidate countries Romania and Turkey); neither signed nor ratified (9 Member States): Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Portugal, Slovakia, and Slovenia (as well as candidate country Bulgaria).
84. Stresses that high priority must be given to full implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders; calls on the Council to take initiatives to protect human rights defenders; calls on the Commission and on the Member States to organise training of their staff in delegations, embassies and consulates on the application of those guidelines; asks the Commission to consider making funds available to cover the expenses of such training; welcomes the fact that a handbook has been drawn up by the EU Dutch Presidency for the implementation of the guidelines; regrets, however, that Parliament has been denied accurate information concerning its content; calls on the Council and the Commission to raise the situation of human rights defenders systematically in all political dialogues; calls on the Commission to organise, on the level of its Delegations, information seminars on the guidelines with all relevant local NGOs; once again calls on the Council to inform Parliament about the implementation of those guidelines on the ground and to involve it fully in the process of evaluating them;

85. Supports the Council in its efforts to mainstream human rights throughout the EU's work, in particular by focusing on the regular review and implementation of a particular set of EU human rights guidelines;

**Mainstreaming of human rights**

86. Welcomes the fact that the Council and the Commission are making efforts to strengthen the coherence between the EU's human rights policy and other international policies; considers it vital for the pursuit of a credible EU human rights policy that these connections be strengthened;

87. Emphasises the importance of the appointment of Michael Matthiessen as the Personal Representative for Human Rights of the EU High Representative for the CFSP, this being an important step forward in the mainstreaming of human rights; welcomes the activities and the personal commitment of the incumbent;

88. Welcomes the fact that working groups dealing with civil and police operations under the CFSP/ESDP pillar, as well as military operations of the EU, have begun to discuss human rights aspects of their operations and to integrate such concerns, including condemnation of the use of violence against women, into instructions given to EU mission personnel on the ground; welcomes the 'Generic Standards of Behaviour for ESDP operations' adopted by the Council on 23 May 2003, which gives comprehensive instructions to all categories of personnel operating in ESDP missions; draws attention, however, to the clear need to see those standards implemented in a scrupulous and consistent fashion in the increasing number of military and civil operations of the EU abroad; considers that, by acting in this way, the EU can prevent abuses of the kind which have occurred in UN peacekeeping missions; asks the Commission to consider making more funds available for training all personnel in the application of those standards;

89. Welcomes the adoption in December 2005 of European Union Guidelines on Promoting Compliance with International Humanitarian Law; urges the Council to apply them to all relevant statements, declarations and demarches;

90. Calls on the European Investment Bank (EIB), as one of the agencies implementing EU development policies through lending and the biggest public financial institution in the world, fully to incorporate human rights concerns in all its project evaluations and to ensure adequate internal capacity to mainstream human rights in its operations; calls in particular for the introduction of clear safeguard procedures, based on international standards, to assess and mitigate the human rights-related impact of its projects; calls for safeguard policies on issues not covered by EU legislation to equal those described in the Equator Principles, as a minimum; calls on the EIB to consult with the Parliament on the matter;

91. Welcomes the fact that the Commission regularly considers whether countries should be added to the 'GSP+-list of countries which are granted the best customs rates for goods to be imported into the EU; asks the Commission, however, to ensure that, for the purposes of its evaluations, it checks both on the entry into force of international obligations and on the effective implementation and enforcement thereof on the ground;

92. Calls on the Commission to apply objective criteria when granting GSP+ benefits to countries which have shown serious flaws in the implementation of the eight ILO conventions relating to Core Labour Standards, and in particular to monitor implementation of the commitments made by Venezuela, Moldova, Sri Lanka, Mongolia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Colombia in advance of the Commission decision of December 2005; in general, calls on the Commission regularly to review the implementation of those conventions and, if necessary, to apply the safeguards provisions contemplated in the Regulation.
93. Asks the Council and the Commission to ensure compatibility of trade agreements with existing UN treaties on human rights in accordance with the Parliament's abovementioned resolution of 14 February 2006, to carry out independent sustainability assessments prior to trade negotiations, specifically assessing the impact on human rights, and to monitor, review and reverse any negative impact of existing and proposed trade rules in respect of human rights and social and environmental matters;

94. Points out that all country-specific human rights evaluations should include an analysis of the fundamental rights of workers, as enshrined in Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 22 of the ICCPR and Article 8 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

95. Asks the Commission to include systematic human rights monitoring in all country strategy papers, regional strategy papers, national indicative programmes, regional indicative programmes and action plans; asks the Commission to update such documents regularly so that they invariably reflect the latest situation regarding human rights on the ground, and to organise appropriate consultations with NGOs when so doing;

96. Asks the Commission to provide a report on the manner in which it has implemented its own proposals as contained in its Communication on the European Union's role in promoting human rights and democratisation in third countries from May 2001, followed by a thorough review;

97. Asks the Commission to develop a strategy for promoting the application of all EU human rights guidelines in conjunction with trans-national corporations, when implementing its recent Communication of 23 March 2006 on corporate social responsibility (COM(2006)0136);

98. Reiterates that the EU's internal policies must not simply be consistent with, but must be exemplary in their compliance with, international human rights law; expresses concern in this respect that current migration management measures do not always, in practice, safeguard access to protection for refugees; calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that migration management does not become a condition for development cooperation with third countries, and that the pilot Regional Protection Programmes remain protection-oriented, are well-resourced and long-term, are fully coordinated with EU humanitarian and development policies, and are based on the principle of international solidarity;

99. Emphasises that, in the fight against trafficking in human beings, a human rights approach with respect to the victims of trafficking should be adopted, and in this regard welcomes the focus on victim protection in the Council's EU plan for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings (1); urges all Member States to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings;

100. Urges the Council and the Commission to set benchmarks for all consultations on human rights, with a view to improving the coherence of policy and political dialogue:

**Effectiveness of the European Parliament's interventions in cases of human rights**

101. Welcomes its increasing role in the human rights sphere, and in safeguarding commitments to improving human rights throughout the world by scrutinising the activities of other institutions and, in particular, through the Sakharov Prize;

102. Welcomes the first year of activities of the Subcommittee on Human Rights within the Foreign Affairs Committee, which, guided by Parliament's activities, has created a focal point for activities on human rights which was absent during the last parliamentary term, including regular reports by the Presidency, the Commission, the Personal Representative for Human Rights, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN Special Rapporteurs and the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, numerous hearings, exchanges of views, expertise and studies as well as human rights input into the work of the Foreign Affairs Committee;

103. Stresses the need for human rights concerns to be mainstreamed into the work of all parliamentary committees and delegations dealing with external relations of the European Parliament; in this respect, draws particular attention to the work done by the Committee on Development in organising regular human rights debates, and calls on the Commission and the Council to follow up the conclusions of these and other human rights debates conducted in the Parliament;

104. Points out, in this regard, that the Subcommittee on Human Rights focused its 2005 activities on the implementation of the EU human rights instruments such as the EU Guidelines on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and set up, in this respect, a system of coordination with representatives of United Nations human rights bodies; regards it as a priority to continue to work closely together with the United Nations and with Council of Europe representatives and bodies, so as to ensure greater consistency and coordination in the human rights field;

105. Considers that Parliament's work on human rights could be rendered more effective in a number of ways, for example through more intense scrutiny of Council and Commission activities vis-à-vis countries with human rights concerns and consistent follow-up and timely impact assessment of all human rights statements made in resolutions and their implementation; suggests that the Subcommittee should consider setting up small informal working groups to follow each set of Guidelines, so as to be better able to follow the Council's work in this regard and to submit proposals;

106. Asks the Subcommittee to follow up human rights resolutions adopted pursuant to Rule 115 in a systematic manner, and to strengthen efforts to address actively the external human rights considerations of all Parliament's activities, including the work of other committees as well as parliamentary delegations;

107. Is of the opinion that the Subcommittee could enhance its impact on policy and programming by following more closely the work programmes of the Council and the Commission, particularly the work of COHOM, and by being invited by the members of COHOM on a regular basis; calls for Members of the European Parliament to be systematically invited to attend de-briefing sessions, such as those organised with NGOs, and de-briefings concerning human rights dialogues with third countries; looks forward to assurances that such invitations will now be issued in a consistent manner;

108. Asks the Bureau of the Parliament and the Conference of Presidents to consider whether measures could be taken to increase the political support given by members in plenary when voting on urgency resolutions of the Parliament pursuant to Rule 115, possibly by moving the voting time to a more appropriate time-slot;

109. Calls for a more constructive role for the Subcommittee on Human Rights in the development of consistent and transparent criteria for the selection of urgency topics, so as to ensure that parliamentary interventions are timely and have maximum impact; calls for members of the Subcommittee to share their expertise in this field and to play a more active and decisive role in the drafting of urgency resolutions; proposes the creation of a permanent working group of members of the Subcommittee for these purposes;

110. Welcomes the drafting of guidelines for Parliament delegations on visits to third countries; asks Parliament's Bureau and the Conference of Presidents to consider measures that could be taken to increase both the visibility and the systematic use of those guidelines; underlines that any mission to a third country should systematically include human rights concerns as a theme and that all participants should be fully briefed on the human rights situation before and during the visit;

111. Welcomes the active role played by the Subcommittee, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the President of the European Parliament in standing up to cases of injustice around the world, especially through the award of the Sakharov Prize; observes on this last point that the prize should be presented in public, at a proper ceremony, to the winners in person;

112. Welcomes Parliament's undertaking to address the complex issue of upholding human rights alongside the fight against international terrorism; points out that consistency in the approach of the EU to different human rights issues is of the utmost importance if the EU wishes to be a credible actor internationally; recalls its decision of 18 January 2006 (1) setting up a Temporary Committee on the alleged involvement of the CIA and, possibly, EU Member States or accession States in the process of extraordinary rendition, which involves the transfer of detainees to so-called black sites where they may be subjected to torture; looks forward to the report and the conclusions of that committee;

Thursday, 18 May 2006

113. Calls upon the Council and the Commission, looking ahead to the EU-US Conference to be held in June 2006, and in accordance with the experts’ report of the UNCHR, to call upon the US Government immediately to close the Guantánamo detention centre, and to insist that all detainees be accorded treatment compatible with humanitarian law and stand trial without delay in fair proceedings in open court before a competent, independent and impartial tribunal;

114. Looks forward to receiving the results of an impact study designed to analyse and evaluate the impact of its activities in the area of human rights;

115. Notes proposals, still under discussion, to strengthen its role in the promotion of democracy, which could support the work of key committees and delegations, provide an observatory for political developments in the Neighbourhood countries and beyond, and enhance the information network between national parliaments across the EU;

116. Notes proposals, still under discussion, to establish a European Endowment for Democracy, which would work with other organisations committed to the democratic process, such as the Council of Europe and the OSCE, and consider how to develop a democracy and human rights promotion entity available to the EU;

Resources devoted to human rights work, including in the Council Secretariat

117. Asks the Commission to designate at least one permanent post in each third-country delegation as having responsibility for monitoring the human rights situation in the country concerned, promoting international human rights standards and being in charge of relations with civil society, such as relations with human rights defenders; asks that this post have sufficient seniority to identify and address problems where necessary; calls, in this regard, for official invitations to be issued on a regular basis to civil society representatives by the delegations of the Commission, so as to further support the work of human rights defenders of third countries;

118. Asks the Commission to strengthen the Human Rights Unit in its Directorate-General for External Relations, providing for additional personnel to cover all human rights issues, in order to enable it to fulfil its additional function as a resource unit; asks also that one staff member in each geographical unit be given added responsibility for human rights;

119. Requests increased funding for the Subcommittee on Human Rights in order to facilitate the financing of field trips and visits by Committee members to human rights black spots in the world, so that breaches of international human rights law can be highlighted;

120. Asks the Council to strengthen the Human Rights Unit in its General Secretariat and in particular to add new posts for experts with human rights backgrounds and specialist knowledge of international humanitarian and human rights law to assist the Personal Representative on Human Rights and to enable a sensible division of labour in his office, particularly given the increase in his responsibilities;

121. Advocates that all Special Representatives appointed by the Council should be assigned one human rights expert to work exclusively in their office; calls on those Representatives to systematically raise human rights issues in their work;

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122. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the candidate and accession countries, the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the OSCE, the governments of the countries mentioned in this resolution, and the offices of the main human rights NGOs based in the EU.