



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

25.2.2014

B7-0217/2014

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Venezuela
(2014/2600(RSP))

Véronique De Keyser, Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García, María Muñiz De Urquiza
on behalf of the S&D Group

B7-0217/2014

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Venezuela
(2014/2600(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Venezuela,
 - having regard to the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 14 February 2014,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the gravity of the current situation in Venezuela was vividly highlighted by the incidents of 12 February when protests at social conditions degenerated into violence, resulting in at least 10 fatalities and between 500 and 600 injuries and arrests;
- B. whereas political tension and rising levels of violence throughout the country are the responsibility of clandestine armed groups that are firing with impunity on demonstrators in the streets of Caracas and the rest of the country;
- C. whereas the clampdown has resulted in the persecution of students, journalists and opposition leaders in particular, with no respect being shown for their freedoms;
- D. whereas freedom of expression and the right to take part in peaceful demonstrations are the cornerstones of democracy; whereas equality and justice for all are impossible without respect for the fundamental freedoms and rights of every citizen;
- E. whereas despite its substantial oil stocks, Venezuela is facing great economic hardship with galloping inflation and shortages of staple commodities, further aggravating its serious social inequalities and generating conflict and discontent among the people in general;
- F. whereas only respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, constructive and respectful dialogue conducted in a spirit of tolerance can help the country emerge from this serious crisis and overcome future difficulties;
1. Condemns the acts of violence disrupting the peaceful demonstrations of 12 February 2014 and in particular the resulting loss of life; presents its sincere condolences to the families of the victims;
 2. Calls for an end to the violence and for dialogue across the entire political spectrum to guarantee public safety and protection, together with a return to calm and normality;
 3. Calls on the Venezuelan authorities to ensure that armed groups to surrender their weapons immediately and disband, ending their impunity and demanding information concerning crimes committed;

4. Urges the Venezuelan Government to launch democratic and constructive dialogue which respects civil rights and fundamental freedoms, so as to rebuild a sound institutional and judicial basis on which to help the country overcome the problems afflicting its people;
5. Calls on the authorities to release the 600 detainees, including students, opposition leaders, journalists and peaceful protesters;
6. Underlines the importance of respect for freedom of expression and freedom to demonstrate peacefully, these being the fundamental principles of a properly functioning democratic state;
7. Stresses that respect for the freedom of the press, information and opinion and for political pluralism is a cornerstone of democracy;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council of the European Union, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly, the OAS General Secretariat and the Government and National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.