

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by

Mr SCHWARTZENBERG, Mr DELORS, Mr VAN MINNEN,  
Mrs FUILLET, Mrs LIZIN, Mrs FOCKE, Mr JAQUET,  
Mr MOREAU, Mr OEHLER, Mr JOSSELIN, Mr LOO, Mr SARRE,  
Mrs ROUDY and Mrs CRESSON

on behalf of the Socialist Group

pursuant to Rule 25 of the Rules of Procedure

on the abolition of the death penalty in the  
European Community

The European Parliament,

- whereas the preamble to the Treaty of Rome commits the signatories thereto to the achievement of 'an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe',
  - whereas the Community of the Nine is not simply a 'common market', but also a common civilization founded on common values, in particular respect for human dignity and human life, even the life of persons who have sought to take the lives of others,
  - whereas the application of the death penalty has led and may continue to lead to irrevocable judicial errors,
  - whereas the death penalty may be replaced by long prison sentences that are just as powerful a deterrent and whereas, as the statistics have amply demonstrated, the incidence of crime has not increased in countries that have abolished capital punishment,
  - whereas six of the nine states comprising the European Community have enacted constitutional or legislative provisions abolishing capital punishment, at least for common law crimes in peacetime (the Netherlands in 1870, Denmark in 1930, Italy in 1944, the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, the United Kingdom in 1969 and Luxembourg in 1979),
  - whereas two other Member States have abolished the death penalty de facto, Belgium having ceased to apply it in 1867 and Ireland in 1956,
  - whereas this leaves only one state of the European Community that continues to apply the death penalty,
  - whereas the Nine have always considered that they should take action to harmonize criminal law, and endorsed, at the European Council in Dublin in December 1979, an agreement to implement the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, signed in Strasbourg on 27 January 1977,
  - whereas the harmonization of criminal law cannot be achieved solely by repressive measures, but must also be based on humanitarian measures,
1. Expresses the determination of the people of the Nine to abolish the death penalty throughout the Community and thus eliminate legal homicide;
  2. Without in any way wishing to encroach on their legislative powers, hereby informs the national Parliaments concerned of this determination of the people;
  3. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the parliaments and governments of the Member States and to the Council and Commission of the European Communities. PE 64.047