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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Pasqualina Napoletano, Christa Prets and Lilli Gruber

on behalf of the PSE Group

on human rights violations in Iran

European Parliament resolution on human rights violations in Iran

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran, notably those of 13 January 2005¹ and 13 October 2005²,
 - having regard to the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as the UN Convention on Children's rights, to which Iran is a State Party,
 - having regard to the EU Presidency declaration on EU-Iran Human Rights Dialogue on 20 December 2005,
 - having regard to the Council of EU declaration on the freedom of expression in Iran on 26 July 2006,
 - having regard to reports on human rights organisations which agree that since 2005, the human rights situation in Iran has deteriorated dramatically,
 - having regard to the annual 2006 report of the international media watchdog Reporters Without Borders (RSF) which placed Iran as the worst violator of press freedoms in the Middle East and the biggest prison for journalists and bloggers in the region,
 - having regard to the recommendation by the head of the judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to judges in December 2002 that they choose alternative punishment in cases where the sentence of stoning would otherwise be imposed, and to his announcement in April 2004 of the ban on torture and the subsequent passage of related legislation by the Iranian Parliament, which was approved by the Guardian Council in May 2004,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the human rights situation in Iran has worsened in many respects in recent years, given the fact that the use of the death penalty (including sentences against juvenile offenders) and executions carried out publicly is frequent, freedom of expression and opinion is still severely restricted, the censorship of the internet and

¹ **P6_TA(2005)0011**

² **P6_TA(2005)0382**

press is widespread, the rate of closure of independent newspapers and the imprisonment of journalists and editors is accelerating, the harassment and the intimidation of journalists and human rights defenders has increased, the repression of religious and ethnic minorities and the detention of prisoners of conscience is daily practice and the torture and ill-treatment continue to be used,

- B. whereas the EU-Iran human rights dialogue was established in 2002 and whereas after the 4th round held on 14-15 June 2004, Iran did not agree to a further round of the Dialogue, despite repeated efforts by the EU over the last and the current year and many offers of dates for the fifth round,
- C. whereas the Iranian Government is increasingly barring university students from pursuing their higher education and has barred numerous students from higher education despite the fact that they had passed competitive entrance exams, whereas the judiciary has prosecuted and sentenced numerous students to imprisonment, fines or flogging during the past year,
- D. whereas the Iranian authorities announced that a report prepared by the judiciary had produced detailed evidence of human rights violations, including torture and ill-treatment of prisoners and detainees in prisons and detention centres; whereas, despite the report's confirmation that measures have been taken to address the problem identified, new reports of torture and ill-treatment of detainees continue to filter through on a regular basis and it appears that torture and other abuses remain routine in many Iranian prisons and detention centres,
- E. whereas on 18 October 2006, the Netherlands immigration Minister agreed to revise the decision to deport homosexual Iranian asylum-seekers and to suspend the expulsion of Iranian Christians until May 2007,
- F. whereas Iran is still not a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,
 - 1. Reiterates its general opposition to the death penalty; strongly condemns the execution of juvenile offenders and minors, which in numerous cases represent a punishment for sexual acts and sexual orientation not considered crimes on the basis of international legal standards and calls upon the Iranian Government and authorities to respect internationally recognised legal safeguards;
 - 2. Calls on the Iranian authorities to give evidence that they are implementing their declared moratorium on stoning and demands the immediate and strict implementation of the ban on torture as announced, passed by the Iranian Parliament and approved by the Guardian Council;
 - 3. Strongly condemns the campaign by the judiciary against journalists, cyber-journalists and web-bloggers; expresses its grave concern about the worsening situation with regard to the freedom of the press in Iran, given the closing down of independent media, the continued harassment and persecution of journalists, the harassment and persecution of independent human right defenders and lawyers and the harassment and non registration of independent non-governmental organisations;

4. Calls on the Iranian Parliament to adapt the Iranian press law and penal code in the light of Iran's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, notably, to repeal all criminal law provisions concerning the peaceful expression of opinion, including in the press;
5. Calls on the Iranian authorities to release unconditionally all prisoners of conscience notably Keyvan Ansari, Keyvan Rafii, Kheirollah Derakhshandi, Abolfazl Jahandar, Koroush Zaim, and Ayatollah Mohammad Kazimini Boroujerdi;
6. Calls upon the government and authorities to eliminate all forms of discrimination based on religious and ethnic grounds and to respect internationally recognised legal safeguards, inter alia with regard to persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities, officially recognised or otherwise;
7. Expresses its concern about the use of violence and discrimination against women in Iran, which remains a serious problem despite the fact that some progress has been made; condemns the use of violence by the Iranian security forces against women who had gathered earlier this year to celebrate International Women's Day on 8 March 2006; condemns, furthermore, the Iranian security forces' violent disruption of a peaceful demonstration on 12 June 2006 by women and men advocating an end to legal discrimination against women in Iran;
8. Calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to demonstrate a commitment to the EU-Iran Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms dialogue by agreeing to a future round of the dialogue at the earliest possible date;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Council to put the respect of human rights and the respect of religious and minority rights as priority and prerequisite for promoting a qualitative improvement of the EU Iran relations;
10. Calls on its Foreign Affairs Committee to consider, in its future reports and recommendations relative to Iran, the respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms as the basic condition for progress in EU/ Iran economic and trade relations;
11. Calls on the Council and the Commission, in collaboration with the Member States, to monitor developments in Iran closely and to use every opportunity to convey to the Iranian authorities the EU's human rights concerns and also to raise concrete cases of human rights abuses;
12. Hopes that the setting-up of its inter-parliamentary delegation for relations with Iran will enable it to engage in productive discussions with the Iranian Parliament and also with Iranian civil society;
13. Calls on the Commission to make effective use of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights in order to intensify contacts and cooperation with Iranian civil society and independent media and furthermore to support, together with the European Parliament, democracy and respect for human rights in Iran;

14. Calls on the Commission to examine the possibility of the establishment and financing of a EU (European Parliament) Radio and TV broadcast in Farsi (Persian) language with the aim of broadcasting European news, European policies with regard to Iran and seeking to promote human and minority rights and support civil society, human right defenders and democratic forces in Iran;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the CFSP High Representative, the Governments and Parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran and to the UN secretary general.