



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

13.9.2011

B7-0505/2011

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 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Eritrea: the case of Isaak Dawit

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

European Parliament resolution on Eritrea: the case of Isaak Dawit

The European Parliament,

- Having regard to Article 9 of the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement as revised 2005 (the Cotonou Agreement), of which Eritrea is signatory,
 - Having regard to the Declaration by the Council Presidency of 22 September 2008 on political prisoners in Eritrea, and to subsequent Council and Commission statements on Eritrea and the human rights situation since then,
 - Having regard to its previous resolutions on Eritrea and in particular those concerning human rights and the case of Mr Dawit Isaak,
 - Having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. Deeply concerned by the deteriorating human rights situation in Eritrea and manifest lack of cooperation from the Eritrean authorities, despite repeated appeals by the European Union and international human rights organisations,
- B. Whereas thousands of Eritreans are incarcerated without charge, fair trial or access to their lawyers or families, among them high ranking members of the ruling party following their public criticism against president Isayas Afeworki in 2001,
- C. Whereas since September 2001 10 independent journalists have been arrested in Asmara, one of whom is a Swedish citizen, Davit Issak, who has not been tried for any crime; whereas the Eritrean authorities have refused to give any comment on his fate,
- D. Whereas Swedish citizen Mr Dawit Isaak will on 23 September 2011 have spent 10 full years imprisoned, without charges, trial or legal hearing; whereas he is considered internationally a prisoner of conscience;
- E. Shocked by the Eritrean government's continued refusal to provide any information about the prisoners' situation including the place of their detention or whether they are still alive,
- F. Whereas some reports from former prison guards indicate that over half the officials and journalists arrested in 2001 are dead,
- G. Recalling that the UN Security Council imposed sanctions on Eritrea in December 2009 for defying the Council's demands that the Eritrea government remove its troops from Djibouti and stop providing political, financial and logistical support to armed insurgents in Somalia,

- H. Whereas the EU is strongly and clearly committed to the protection of human rights as a fundamental value; and whereas press freedom and freedom of speech are among those universal and vital rights;
1. Firmly condemns all human rights abuses in Eritrea and calls on the country's authorities to uphold human rights and fully cooperate with the European Union institutions and international human rights organisations,
 2. Calls on the Eritrean authorities to immediately release Dawit Issak and former high ranking officials, in compliance with the universal declaration of human rights,
 3. Regrets that Mr Dawit Isaak has not yet regained his freedom; deeply regrets that he has by now had to spend ten years as prisoner of conscience; fears for the life of Mr Dawit Isaak under the well known harsh conditions of Eritrean prison and without access to necessary health care;
 4. Calls on the Eritrean authorities to lift the ban on the country's independent press and to immediately release the independent journalists and all others who have been jailed simply for exercising their right to freedom of expression,
 5. Calls on the Council to urgently consider applying targeted sanctions on relevant Eritrean authorities including visa restrictions for President Afewerki on travelling to the EU; and calls on the Council to unilaterally suspend development assistance until the government of Eritrea responds to the EU demand;
 6. Calls on the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy to map all efforts to date by the EU or its Member States to obtain the release of Mr Dawit Isaak and to publicly present the results in order to increase transparency and accountability in these matters;
 7. Appeals to the African Union as a partner to the EU and with an expressed commitment to the universal values of democracy, human rights and rule of law to step up its actions regarding the regrettable human rights situation in Eritrea and to work together with the EU for the release of all political prisoners and Mr Dawit Isaak,
 8. Reiterates its demand for an inter-Eritrean national conference to be held, bringing together the various political party leaders and representatives of civil society with a view to finding a solution on the current crisis and to setting the country on the path to democracy, political pluralism and sustainable development;
 9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice President of the European Commission, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the parliament and government of Eritrea, the Pan-African Parliament and the African Union.