



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

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*Plenary sitting*

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15.7.2014

B8-0022/2014

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Sudan, the case of Meriam Yahia Ibrahim  
(2014/2727(RSP))

**Marie-Christine Vergiat, Dennis de Jong, Kateřina Konečná, Kostadinka Kuneva, Malin Björk**  
on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

**European Parliament resolution on Sudan, the case of Meriam Yahia Ibrahim (2014/2727(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- Having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief;
  - Having regards to article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and General Comment 22 by the United Nations Human Rights Committee;
  - Having regards to the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights, ratified by Sudan in 1986;
  - Having regards to the rights of children;
  - Having regards to the European Parliament recommendation to the Council of 13 June 2013 on the draft EU Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief;
  - Having regard to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) on Sudan, of 2005;
  - Having regards to the European Parliament resolution on Clashes in Sudan and subsequent media censorship (2013/2873(RSP));
  - Having regards to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure;
- A. Whereas in February 2014, 27 year old Sudanese citizen, graduate of Sudan University's school of medicine, Meriam Yahia Ibrahim, was arrested on the charge of adultery and "apostasy" following accusations of members of her father's Muslim family for marrying in 2012 Daniel Wani, a South Sudanese and US citizen, of Christian belief;
- B. Whereas Meriam Yahia Ibrahim was at the time pregnant and was arrested along with her 20 months old son; whereas they were both kept in the Obdurman women's prison in the Sudanese capital Khartoum, under harsh conditions and shackled endangering the health of both as well as of the unborn child; whereas her husband was denied access both to her and their son;
- C. Whereas Meriam Yahia Ibrahim gave birth to her daughter Maya in prison, in unacceptable conditions violating human dignity, with her legs chained, seriously

endangering the health of both mother and child; whereas these constituted gross violation of women's and children's rights;

- D. Whereas on May 12, 2014, the court condemned heavily pregnant Meriam Yahia Ibrahim to flogging and death for adultery and "apostasy", sentences that were later annulled by a Court of Appeals following international pressures and campaigns;
- E. Whereas on 23 June, 2014, she was released from prison with her two children, following the court of appeals decision, but was arrested again at Khartoum's airport as the family was about to depart for the US, allegedly for attempting to leave the country with forged travel documents that were issued by the South Sudan Embassy in Khartoum;
- F. Whereas Meriam Yahia Ibrahim and her children were subsequently released and found refuge in US embassy premises in Khartoum, where they are still remaining;
- G. Whereas Sudan is a country characterized by its numerous ethnic (57) and tribal (570) groups, linguistic diversity (180 languages and dialects) as well as religious diversity (70% Muslim, 10% Christians, animist traditional religions); whereas Sudan's bill of rights protects freedom of religion and Sudan has ratified numerous African and international treaties that protect privacy and absolutely prohibit corporal punishment and the use of the death penalty in these contexts; whereas diversity and tolerance exist in Sudan society itself;
- H. Whereas the people of Sudan is suffering of years of political and social repression imposed by the regime, leading to conflicts including ethnic, arrests of opposition and trade union leaders as well as journalists, further impoverishment, violations of human and humanitarian laws; whereas efforts are currently underway to arrive at a negotiated solution to the situation;
- I. Whereas the protests and demonstrations held in September 2013 as a reaction to the austerity measures announced by the Sudanese government that was following IMF guidelines, were met with repressive measures, including imprisonments, media censorship;
- J. Whereas in 2005 the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed, which led to the declaration of independence of South Sudan on 9 July 2011; whereas armed conflicts have erupted around the border area due to unresolved border issues and claims on oil resources; whereas in 2013 and 2014 armed conflicts in South Sudan have caused new waves of refugees fleeing back into Sudan;

- K. Whereas the conflicts in Southern Kordofan, the Blue Nile and Darfur have been intensifying, with serious consequences for the country as a whole;
- L. Whereas Hassan Bashir, while talking of national dialogue is in fact continuing oppression against all opposition forces;
- M. Whereas a number of political parties and movements comprising the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) agreed, on 21 April 2014, on a Road Map to Comprehensive Political Settlement in Sudan;
- N. Whereas the right to freedom of thought, belief and religion covered all beliefs including religious, non-religious, agnostic and atheistic beliefs, the right not to believe and the right to change one's religion or belief, is a universal human right and a fundamental freedom of each human being, interrelated with other human rights and fundamental freedoms as enshrined in Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- O. Whereas several UNCHR resolutions call 'all States, within their national legal framework, in conformity with international human rights instruments, to take all appropriate measures to combat hatred, discrimination, intolerance and acts of violence, intimidation and coercion motivated by religious intolerance, including attacks on religious places, and to encourage understanding, tolerance and respect in matters relating to freedom of belief or religion';
- P. Whereas in many countries around the world, religious issues are used for political purposes and cause many deadly conflicts, whose first victims often are women and children, and that therefore these countries should be encouraged to include secularism – defined as the strict separation between religion and belief on the one hand and the State on the other - in fundamental legal texts;
1. Denounces the treatment to which Meriam Yahia Ibrahim and her children were subjected to, expresses solidarity to her and her family, and calls for guarantees to be given for them to be able to enjoy conditions of freedom and safety as a family;
  2. Calls on Sudan to respect the International treaties of which it is a signatory;
  3. Calls for respect of political and social rights, and freedom of choice of religion or belief of all citizens of Sudan; calls for fair distribution of the country's wealth to all its citizens, to enable the people to exit conditions of poverty and deprivation, achieve the MDGs including the goals in education and health;

4. Demands the respect of women's health and reproductive rights, and children's rights;
5. Strongly condemns all kinds of discrimination and intolerance based on religion and belief; stresses that the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion and belief is a fundamental human right;
6. Reiterates its strong attachment to secularism, defined as the strict separation between religion or belief on the one hand and the State on the other, that implies the rejection of any religious interference in the functioning of government and of any public interference in religious affairs unless prescribed by law and necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others, as well as non-discrimination with respect to religion or whatever belief (including non-theistic and atheist beliefs);
7. Calls on all governments and religious authorities to promote tolerance, respect for freedom of religion and belief and to take initiatives against hatred; asks the governments to guarantee freedom of religion and belief; reiterates its commitment to the value of secularism;
8. Expresses support to efforts to achieve an inclusive negotiated solution to the situation in Sudan; it notes the "Road Map to Comprehensive Political Settlement in Sudan" put forward by the Sudan Revolutionary Front that aims at a peaceful political settlement, with first objective the creation of conducive environment and confidence building measures for inclusive National Constitutional Dialogue, and putting an end to the killing of civilians;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the parliament and government of Sudan, the African Union institutions, the co-presidents of the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly and the Panafrican Parliament.