



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Plenary sitting

12.1.2015

B8-0023/2015

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 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Egypt
(2014/3017(RSP))

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on behalf of the EFDD Group

B8-0023/2015

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Egypt
(2014/3017(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Egypt, in particular that of 17 July 2014 on freedom of expression and assembly in Egypt¹ and that of 6 February 2014 on the situation in Egypt²,
- having regard to its resolution of 23 October 2013 on the European Neighbourhood Policy: towards a strengthening of the partnership. Position of the European Parliament on the 2012 reports³,
- having regard to the EU-Egypt association agreement of 2001, which entered into force in 2004, strengthened by the Action Plan of 2007, and to the Commission's progress report of 20 March 2013 on its implementation,
- having regard to the Constitution of Egypt adopted by referendum on 14-15 January 2014,
- having regard to Egyptian Law 107 on the Right to Public Meetings, Processions and Peaceful Demonstrations of 24 November 2013,
- having regard to Egyptian Presidential Decree No 136 on enhancing sanctions against the offense of vandalism of public and government facilities of 27 October 2014,
- having regard to the Egyptian interim government's 'Programme to Sustain the Path to Democracy',
- having regard to the speeches of Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of 1 January 2015 concerning Islamic extremism and of 6 January 2015 concerning the need for peaceful and constructive relations between Egypt's Muslims and Christians,
- having regard to the statement of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of 25 October 2014 concerning terrorist attacks in Sinai,
- having regard to the speech of Anita Nirody, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Egypt, of 9 December 2014 concerning Egypt's efforts to modernise and enhance the transparency of anti-corruption and accountability institutions,
- having regard to the Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2014)0007.

² Texts adopted, P7_TA(2014)0100.

³ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0446.

- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Egypt is party,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Egyptian government played a pivotal role in brokering a truce and then an open-ended ceasefire between Israel and Palestine on a seven-week conflict that resulted in the death of nearly 2 200 Palestinians and 70 Israelis in July and August 2014;
- B. whereas Egypt’s representative at the United Nations, Amr Abu Al-Atta, presented a resolution adopted by the 60th plenary session of the United Nations in November 2014, addressing the Palestine situation and highlighting recent issues in East Jerusalem;
- C. whereas on 5 January 2015 Egypt formed a ‘crisis cell’ for 20 nationals, all of them Christians, that were kidnapped in two separate incidents in Libya;
- D. whereas over the summer of 2014 ISIS operations and intelligence officers infiltrated the Sinai peninsula and took charge of the local Ansar Beit al-Maqdas jihadis, thereby opening up a dangerous new front against Egypt and Israel; whereas the Egyptian army has announced its intention to expand the buffer zone in Sinai, along the Gaza border, up to two kilometres;
- E. whereas on 24 October 2014, 28 Egyptian soldiers were killed and another 30 injured when a car bomb exploded at the Karm al-Qawadis security checkpoint in Sheikh Zuweid in North Sinai;
- F. whereas, in his statement during a visit to a Coptic Christmas mass on 6 January 2015, Egypt’s President Abdul Fattah al-Sisi called for a ‘religious revolution’, asking Muslim leaders to help in the fight against extremism;
- G. whereas the EU is related to Egypt by the Association Agreement, which entered into force on 1 June 2004 and is focused on cooperation in democratic and social reform, economic modernisation, migration issues and trade;
- H. whereas Egypt is still going through a period of political turmoil, resulting in grave violations of the right to a fair trial, freedom of expression and association, freedom of religion and gender equality;
- I. whereas on 23 June 2014 three Al-Jazeera journalists were accused of ‘falsifying news’ and of belonging to or assisting a terrorist cell, and were handed down jail sentences of between 7 and 10 years; whereas in December 2014 an Egyptian court’s call for a retrial of three jailed Al-Jazeera journalists acknowledged major flaws in the original convictions but left the men in unjust incarceration;
- J. whereas in October 2014 President al-Sisi issued a decree, Law 136 of 2014, that places all ‘public and vital facilities’ under military jurisdiction for the next two years;

- K. whereas civil prosecutors have used the October decree retroactively, referring cases of civilians already under investigation or facing trial in civilian courts to military jurisdiction;
- L. whereas Egypt's military courts operate thus under the authority of the Ministry of Defence and not under the civilian judicial authorities, and the judges are serving military officers;
- M. whereas children can also fall under the jurisdiction of military courts;
- N. whereas the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, in interpreting the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (to which Egypt is a state party), has said that military courts 'should not, in any circumstances whatsoever, have jurisdiction over civilians';
- O. whereas, following the terrorist attack in August 2013 on a police station in the neighbourhood of Kerdasa, when eleven police officers and two civilians died, an Egyptian criminal court handed down provisional mass death sentences against 188 defendants on 2 December 2014;
- P. whereas, prior to this case, a judge in the governorate of Minya imposed 1 212 death sentences in March and April 2014, after two trials arising from other attacks on police stations in 2013 that left at least two other police officers dead;
- Q. whereas in 2013 a government study found that 99.3 % of Egyptian women reported being harassed at some point in their lifetimes, and whereas Egyptian men are still seldom held accountable for rape or for episodes of sexual harassment;
- R. whereas, though homosexuality is not specifically banned under Egyptian law, the state does persecute and imprison LGBT individuals on charges such 'debauchery' and 'shameless public acts';
- S. whereas, prior to his removal in July 2013, President Morsi's Muslim Brotherhood-dominated government had shown disregard for rights protections, with an increase in the prosecutions of journalists, police abuse and sectarian violence;
1. Acknowledges the strategic role of Egypt in dealing with the infiltration of ISIS terrorist cells in the Sinai peninsula, in the uncovering of ISIS recruitment cells in the rest of the country and in the stability of the Mediterranean region;
 2. Appreciates Egypt's fruitful efforts in contributing to the cessation of hostilities between Israel and Palestine over the summer of 2014;
 3. Welcomes Egypt's institutional reforms and national efforts to modernise and enhance the transparency of anti-corruption and accountability institutions;
 4. Notes with concern that, also after the deposition of President Morsi, a great number of political opponents, peaceful protesters, journalists, bloggers, trade unionists, civil society activists and minorities have been imprisoned without a fair trial;

5. Reminds the competent Egyptian authorities, President al-Sisi and the interim government that the legitimate fight against terrorism should not prevent them from fulfilling their national and international obligations in protecting human rights;
6. Calls on all political actors to ensure a smooth and non-violent transition towards the democratic elections foreseen at the end of March 2015;
7. Expresses its concern about the restricted freedom of expression and association and the expansion of use of military trials against civilians following the adoption of Law 136;
8. Urges the EU and its Member States to design and implement a comprehensive and targeted strategy to engage all Egyptian political parties and actors in a real and inclusive dialogue in order to enhance the democratic process and stop the cycle of violence on all sides;
9. Expresses its solidarity with the Egyptian people and its condolences to the families of all the victims of terrorism and of excessive use of force by the Egyptian authorities;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, and the Parliament and Government of Egypt.