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## Human Rights breaches in Iran, Kazakhstan and Guatemala

- Iran must stop violations against women protesting at having to wear the hijab
- Kazakhstan must end political repression and improve media freedom
- Guatemala must combat corruption and impunity

### **MEPs deplore human rights violations and all forms of political repression in Iran, Kazakhstan and Guatemala.**

On Thursday, the European Parliament adopted three resolutions taking stock of the human rights situation in Iran, Kazakhstan and Guatemala.

#### **Iran must stop criminalising the work of women's rights defenders**

The European Parliament urge Iran to stop criminalising the work of women's rights defenders, including the work done by those peacefully protesting against the compulsory law on wearing the hijab, and calls on the authorities in Iran to abolish this practice. MEPs ask all EU countries with a diplomatic presence in the country to use all the diplomacy tools in their power to support and protect human rights defenders on the ground.

MEPs also call on the Iranian authorities to immediately release all human rights defenders and journalists detained and sentenced merely for exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. They recall that at least eight journalists are currently in detention in Iran and that many have been systematically targeted by the authorities through criminal investigations, asset freezes, arbitrary arrest and surveillance, including those working for the BBC Persian service. According to the NGO Iran Human Rights, in 2018 the second highest number of people in the world were executed in Iran.

Finally, the resolution, adopted by a show of hands, reiterates the European Parliament's call on the government of Iran to immediately and unconditionally release human rights lawyer and Sakharov Prize Laureate Nasrin Sotoudeh, who earlier this week was sentenced 38 years in prison and 148 lashes by an Iranian court.

### **Kazakhstan must end the political repression**

Parliament calls on the Kazakhstan authorities to put an end to all forms of political repression, since the number of political prisoners in Kazakhstan has increased , and the right to freedom of association remains largely restricted in the country. Taking note that last year the authorities banned the peaceful opposition movement Democratic Choice of Kazakhstan, MEPs urge the government to end such actions.

MEPs also call on the government of Kazakhstan to repeal its Criminal Code provisions on prohibiting 'spreading information that is known to be false', since they are used to charge and imprison civil society activists and journalists. They finally demand an end to the Kazakh government's harrasment of and reprisals against journalists critical of the government and to the blocking of access to information both online and offline.

The text was adopted by a show of hands.

### **Guatemala must fight corruption and impunity**

MEPs express their deep concern at the increased number of killings, acts of violence, and the lack of security for all citizens in Guatemala, in particular women, human rights defenders, and journalists. Although Guatemala has continued to make some progress in prosecuting human rights and corruption cases , the misuse of criminal procedures to prevent or sanction the work of human rights defenders remains a matter of concern . In this regard, the European Parliament calls on Guatemalan authorities to cease intimidating Guatemalan civil society.

MEPs are also concerned about the current situation that the UN-backed International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) faces in the country. In January, the Guatemalan Government unilaterally cancelled CICIG's mandate with immediate effect and requested that this Commission must leave the country. Taking note of this, MEPs ask the Guatemalan Government to cease all illegal attacks against the CICIG and its national and international staff who had been investigating high-level cases of corruption.

The text was adopted by a show of hands.

### **Further information**

[Adopted texts will be available here \(14.03.2019\)](#)

[Video recording of the debates \(14.03.2019\)](#)

[EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material](#)

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