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## 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 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Egypt  
(2013/2697(RSP))

**Franziska Katharina Brantner, Hélène Flautre, Barbara Lochbihler,  
Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Judith Sargentini, Helga Trüpel, Nikos Chrysogelos,  
Malika Benarab-Attou**  
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Egypt  
(2013/2697(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Egypt, in particular that of 14 March 2013<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the statement of 28 June 2013 by EU High Representative (HR/VP) Catherine Ashton on the planned demonstrations in Egypt,
  - having regard to the statement by its President of 5 June 2013 on the conviction of 43 NGO workers in Egypt,
  - having regard to the joint statement by EU High Representative (HR/VP) Catherine Ashton and Commissioner Füle on the Egyptian NGO trial verdicts of 5 June 2013,
  - having regard to the EU-Egypt Association Agreement and to the EU-Egypt ENP Action Plan agreed in 2007,
  - having regard to the report of the European Court of Auditors on EU Cooperation in Egypt in the Field of Governance, published on 18 June 2013,
  - having regard to the statements on the draft legislation on civil society by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights of 8 May 2013 and by the UN Secretary-General of 5 June 2013,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Egypt ratified in 1982,
  - having regard to the eight core ILO conventions, which Egypt has ratified,
  - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Egypt is a key partner of the EU in the southern Mediterranean; whereas political, economic, cultural and social developments in Egypt have significant implications for the whole region and beyond; whereas Egypt is in the midst of a delicate transition period after the revolution that brought to an end the authoritarian regime of Hosni Mubarak;
- B. whereas on 30 June 2013, one year after Egypt's presidential elections, millions of opponents of President Morsi massed in Tahir Square and outside the Presidential Palace in Cairo and in other Egyptian cities, calling on Morsi to step down; whereas the Rebel Movement (Tamarod) that lies behind the mobilisation warned that it would launch a civil disobedience campaign if Morsi failed to do so;
- C. whereas the protesters stormed the headquarters of the Muslim Brotherhood; whereas in

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2013)0095.

the subsequent incidents 11 people died and many were injured;

- D. whereas Tamarod announced on Saturday that activists had collected over 22 million signatures in their petition campaign for the withdrawal of confidence from President Mohamed Morsi and the holding of an early presidential election;
- E. whereas the ministers of foreign affairs, tourism, the environment, communications and legal affairs announced their resignation in an act of ‘solidarity with the people’s demand to overthrow the regime’;
- F. whereas Egypt’s army has given the country’s rival parties 48 hours to resolve the political crisis, announcing that it will offer its own ‘road map’ for peace if Islamist President Mohammed Morsi and his opponents fail to heed ‘the will of the people’;
- G. whereas on 4 June 2013 the North Cairo Criminal Court condemned 43 Egyptian and foreign staff members of five international NGOs (Freedom House, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, the International Centre for Journalists and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation) to one to five years in prison for ‘managing unlicensed branches’ of their organisations, ‘conducting research, political trainings, surveys and workshops without licenses’, ‘training political parties and groups’ and ‘illegally receiving foreign funding’; whereas the court also ordered the confiscation of funds and the closure of the Egypt-based branches of those NGOs; whereas the case was initiated under the previous military-led government in late 2011;
- H. whereas a new draft Law on Associations was submitted by President Morsi to the Shura Council on 29 May 2013; whereas this draft law has been strongly criticised, both at home and abroad, for allowing excessive and discretionary restrictions by state authorities on operations of civil society organisations, and thereby failing to comply with Egypt’s international human rights obligations, while acknowledging the consultation with the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe;
- I. whereas a genuine and independent civil society is of fundamental importance in supporting a peaceful and inclusive political and social transformation of the country;
- J. whereas physical violence and harassment against journalists has increased; whereas a number of legal proceedings against journalists and bloggers on the grounds of insulting the President have been initiated; whereas the number of blasphemy cases has increased since President Morsi took office;
- K. whereas the current draft Law on the Protection of the Right to Peacefully Demonstrate in Public Places would put serious limitations on freedom of assembly;
- L. whereas Egyptian women are in a particularly vulnerable situation in the current period of transition; whereas female protestors are often subject to violence, sexual assault and other forms of degrading treatment, while women rights activists face threats and harassment; whereas women have experienced major setbacks in the field of political participation;
- M. whereas there are regular reports of cases of restrictions on the right of workers to establish independent unions and of reprisals and acts of intimidation against those

attempting to organise and to strike; whereas the failure of employers to recognise or negotiate with independent unions is a source of considerable social tension; whereas the ILO supervisory bodies have repeatedly called on the Egyptian authorities to ensure compliance of national legislation with the ILO Conventions, including by ending the institutionalisation of a single trade union system;

- N. whereas the law on the ‘Protection of the Revolution’ adopted on 22 November 2012 has been denounced by Egyptian NGOs as being imprecise as regards the listed crimes and consequently placing unacceptable limits on freedom of speech, freedom of the media and freedom of assembly;
  - O. whereas the EU-Egypt Task Force has underlined its commitment to the promotion and respect of human rights; whereas the success of the European Neighbourhood Policy, as well as that of the reforms in the area of human rights, will depend on the involvement of civil society in the implementation of the relevant policies;
  - P. whereas the EU is Egypt’s first economic partner and its main source of foreign investment and development cooperation; whereas the EU-Egypt Task Force agreed a major assistance package of EUR 5 billion for 2012-2013;
  - Q. whereas, in line with its revised European Neighbourhood Policy after the Arab Spring and notably the ‘more for more’ approach, the EU’s level and scope of engagement with Egypt is incentive-based and therefore dependent on progress with regard to the country’s respect for its commitments on democracy, the rule of law, human rights and gender equality;
  - R. whereas the European Court of Auditors concluded in June 2013 that the Commission and the EEAS had not been able to effectively manage EU support to improve governance in Egypt;
- 1. Expresses its deepest concern at the present tense political situation in Egypt triggered by an escalating harsh confrontation between the parties on the failure of the current government to deliver on promises and to deal with the urgent problems of the country, thus adding further instability to an already fragile and volatile situation;
  - 2. Expresses its sincere condolences to the families of the protesters and wishes the numerous wounded a rapid recovery;
  - 3. Calls on all parties to act responsibly, avoiding all violent actions and provocations that could undermine or hinder the legitimate right of the people to demonstrate peacefully and freely express their will and opinions;
  - 4. Expresses its concern over the political intrusion of the Egyptian army, and calls on the military to fully respect freedom of assembly and the right to demonstrate peacefully, avoiding any temptation or ambition to interfere with or replace civilian power; calls on the army also to put in place all necessary measures to ensure that all Egyptians can demonstrate in safety, particularly women, who have been subject to violence and sexual assault during demonstrations;

5. Reminds President Morsi and his government that a democratic system does not foresee the dictatorship of the majority, and regrets his lack of ability and the one-sided approach that has jeopardised the spirit of the revolution of 2011 and further polarised society, failing to take into account the legitimate concerns and aspirations of all the democratic forces of Egyptian society;
6. Stresses, in this regard, the urgency and importance of starting a genuine, frank, constructive, inclusive and open national dialogue between the democratic components of society with a view to laying the bases for the creation of genuinely shared and trusted, stable and effective democratic institutions;
7. Deplores the plight of civil society organisations and human rights defenders in Egypt and expresses its solidarity with, and support for, all the NGOs being subjected to increasing legal and administrative restrictions, violence, smear campaigns, judicial harassment and other forms of abuse by, or with the tacit approval of, the Egyptian authorities, in their actions against civil society organisations, notably those active in the field of human rights;
8. Stresses that the ongoing crackdown against civil society in Egypt is occurring against an alarming background of an overall deterioration of the human rights situation and the reversal of the democratisation process initiated since the overthrow of the Mubarak regime;
9. Strongly denounces the judicial decision of 4 June 2013 by the Cairo Criminal Court to sentence 43 Egyptian and foreign NGO workers to jail, to close the local branches of the five foreign NGOs concerned and to confiscate their assets; considers that this politically motivated sentence, which criminalises the legitimate work of foreign organisations in Egypt, is an unacceptable attack on freedom of expression and association in the country and constitutes a serious blow to international and EU efforts to support Egypt in its political transition;
10. Believes that the investigations and judicial proceedings in the ‘foreign funding case’ were marred by irregularities and government interference; calls on the Egyptian authorities to overturn this ruling and for the President to exercise his prerogative of pardon; expresses its solidarity with those of the sentenced who had to flee from Egypt, leaving their families behind;
11. Is concerned that further investigations into the funding of Egyptian NGOs are reported to be underway; is also concerned at reports that a new law on demonstrations would give the police broad discretion in using force to disperse demonstrators;
12. Calls on the Egyptian authorities to postpone adoption of the current draft NGO law that would allow excessive and discretionary control by state authorities over the establishment, funding, operations and internal functioning of NGOs and would therefore seriously threaten the continued existence of an independent civil society in Egypt, and to review the draft law in light of the remaining recommendations of the Venice Commission so as to bring it into line with international standards;
13. Expresses its concern at the numerous reports of violations of labour rights in Egypt; calls

on the Egyptian authorities to allow workers to exercise their right to associate and to carry out their union activities, and to align domestic legislation with the ILO conventions to which Egypt is a party;

14. Is alarmed by the growing restrictions on freedom of expression; deplores the fact that the legislation restricting freedom of expression has still not been revised and that it is regularly used to silence dissent and muffle the media; calls on the Egyptian authorities to end the practice of criminal charges of defamation of religion and to review all sentences relating to such charges, including the case of Coptic teacher Dimyana Obeid Abd Al Nour;
15. Calls for the immediate release of human rights defenders and a review of their trials on grounds of reported shortcomings in the proceedings;
16. Expresses its profound dismay at the recent assessment of EU support for governance and human rights in Egypt by the European Court of Auditors (ECA), which, inter alia, criticises the absence of EU measures against endemic corruption in Egypt; believes that similar major EU policy deficiencies are likely to occur in relation to other third countries, notably in the Neighbourhood; stresses that the ECA report points to the need for a profound rethinking by the EU of its approach to authoritarian regimes and to transition countries, notably with regard to coherence and linkages between its political dialogue and assistance, the application of human rights conditionality, its support for civil society and its budget support policy; calls on the EEAS and the Commission to drastically review their assistance programmes to Egypt and, in light of this report, to provide effective support for democratisation in Egypt and for human rights activists; requests that the EEAS and the Commission report back to Parliament on the measures taken to implement the ECA's recommendations;
17. Calls on the EEAS, the Commission and the Member States to make it clear to the Egyptian authorities that the negative developments, notably with regard to civil society, constitute a turning-point in the EU-Egypt relationship; calls on the EEAS and Member States to forcefully request that the Egyptian authorities put an end to interference and to all forms of pressure, intimidation and harassment against civil society activists and journalists; expects EU assistance, economic integration and the other benefits foreseen under the EU-Egypt Task Force to be conditional on tangible progress, notably in the areas outlined in the present resolution;
18. Calls on the Member States to strictly abide by Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, which defines common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment, notably with regard to its Criterion 2 (respect for human rights), in relation to Egypt;
19. 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 President, Government and Shura Council of Egypt.