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## 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 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Bahrain, in particular the cases of Nabeel Rajab, Abdulhadi al-Khawaja and Ibrahim Sharif  
(2014/2553(RSP))

**Tarja Cronberg, Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Margrete Auken, Raül Romeva i Rueda**  
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on Bahrain, in particular the cases of Nabeel Rajab, Abdulhadi al-Khawaja and Ibrahim Sharif (2014/2553(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Bahrain and in particular on 17 January and 11 September 2013,
- having regard to the visit of a delegation of its Subcommittee on Human Rights to Bahrain on 19 and 20 December 2012 and to the press statement issued by that delegation, and having regard to the Arab Peninsula delegation visit from 29 April until 1 May 2013 and its press statement on 7 March and 30 April 2013,
- having regard to the statements of the Spokesperson of Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), Catherine Ashton, of 7 January 2013, 11 February 2013, 1 July 2013, 25 November 2013 and 16 January 2014
- having regard to the Local EU Statement on latest developments in Bahrain (suspension of opposition's participation to National Consensus Dialogue, arrest of K. Al-Marzooq) of 19 September 2013
- having regard to the EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy of 25 June 2012
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders of 2004, as updated in 2008,
- having regard to statement of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Joint Statement on the OHCHR and the human rights situation in Bahrain on 9 September 2013,
- having regard to the 23rd EU-GCC Joint Council and Ministerial Meeting, held in Manama, Bahrain, on 30 June 2013,
- having regard to the Opinion 12/2013 (Bahrain) adopted by the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention at its sixty-sixth session on 29 April–3 May 2013,
- having regard to the report released in November 2011 by the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) and to its follow-up report of 21 November 2012,
- having regard to the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of Child and the Arab Charter on Human Rights, to all of which Bahrain is a party,

- having regard to Rules 122(5) and 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the human rights situation in Bahrain remains a matter of concern with continuing crackdowns by the Bahraini authorities on peaceful political protesters, including the disproportionate use of violence and torture by security and police forces as well as the excessive use of tear gas;
- B. whereas some human rights activists have been condemned to high prison terms including life imprisonment, solely for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly, notably the President of the Bahrain Centre for Human Rights (BCHR) and deputy secretary general of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), Nabeel Rajab, Abdulhadi-al-Khawaja founder of BCHR and regional coordinator of Front Line Defenders, and Ebrahim Sharif secretary general of the National Democratic Action society;
- C. whereas Mr. al-Khawaja and Mr. Sharif reported to have repeatedly been tortured in detention and bore visible signs of ill-treatment while appearing in court; whereas Mr. al-Khawaja undertook a 110 days hunger strike to bring international attention and pressure on the issue of political prisoners in Bahrain;
- D. whereas in April 2013, Bahrain postponed the visit of the UN special rapporteur on torture, Juan Mendez for the second time and no new dates were proposed;
- E. whereas on 9 September 2013 at the 24th session of the UN Human Rights Council, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay expressed concern on the clampdown on human rights defenders in Bahrain and stressed the vital importance of protecting the right to peaceful protest, including freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and association;
- F. whereas on 21 January 2014 a third request for early release submitted by Nabeel Rajab's lawyers to the Court was rejected;
- G. whereas according to information published in the Official Gazette regarding the release of 208 prisoners in October 2013 and the release of 172 prisoners in January 2014, there are evidences that the administration handles hundreds of releases constantly whether through conditional release or exemption from the remaining sentence period;
- H. whereas following the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) report, appointed to investigate official conduct during anti-government protests in 2011, the Bahraini authorities committed themselves to implementing reforms; whereas most of the BICI recommendations have not yet been implemented;
- I. whereas the BICI notably concluded that: "police units used force against civilians in a manner that was both unnecessary and disproportionate" and whereas the January 8, 2014 incident in which police officers shot and fatally wounded 19- year-old Fadhel Abbas Muslim Marhoonone and seriously injured a 17-year-old Sadeq al-Asafoor, not informing

their families about the event for two weeks, nurture fears that the situation has not really changed;

- J. whereas on 15 January 2014 HRH Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa, upon the request of HM King Hamad Bin Issa Al Khalifa, held wide ranging talks with participants in the National Consensus Dialogue, including with Al-Wefaq's Secretary General Sheikh Ali Salman, for the first time since the events of February 2011;
- K. whereas parliamentary and municipal elections are planned for 2014;
- 1. Welcomes the news that HRH Bahrain's Crown Prince Salman bin Hamad al-Khalifa held wide ranging talks and calls for the resumption of the National Consensus Dialogue which was suspended at the beginning of January and expresses its hope that inclusive talks without preconditions can lead to the needed sustainable reforms of Bahrain's state institutions;
- 2. Urges the Bahraini authorities to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, both online and offline, in line with Bahrain's international human rights obligations and to ensure that all human rights organizations and human rights defenders are able to carry out their work without intimidation or harassment; Underlines the importance of free and pluralistic media.;
- 3. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of conscience - political activists, journalists, bloggers, doctors and paramedics, human rights defenders and peaceful protesters - including Nabeel Rajab, Ibrahim Sharif and Abdulhadi al-Khawaja ;
- 4. Opposes the creation and use of special courts or the use of military courts to try national security crimes;
- 5. Recognises that some steps have been taken by the Bahraini authorities to implement the recommendations by the Bahraini Independent Commission of Inquiry; Stresses nevertheless that more must needs to be done to improve the human rights situation in the country and calls on the Government of Bahrain to implement fully and swiftly the BICI and Universal Periodic Review recommendations;
- 6. Welcomes the operational launch of the office of the Ministry of Interior's Ombudsman and a Special Investigations Unit in the Public Prosecution Office and encourages these institutions to act independently and effectively; Further welcomes the increasingly active role assumed by the National Institution for Human Rights since its reform and the creation of the 'Prisoners and Detainees' Commission", which will monitor places of detention in order to prevent torture and ill-treatment; Calls on Bahraini authorities to improve the conditions and treatment of prisoners and to allow relevant local and international organisations access to detention centres;
- 7. Calls on the Bahraini authorities to ensure accountability and to fight against impunity regarding deaths and allegations of torture during the 2011 unrest and in response to on-going allegations of abuses; urges that authorities to launch an independent investigation

into the death of Fadhel Abbas Muslim Marhoonone and the surrounding events and recalls that Bahrain's constitution forbids the use of torture;

8. calls on the HR/VP to condemn the on-going violations of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to impose targeted restrictive measures (visa bans and asset freezes) against those individuals responsible for, and involved in, the human rights abuses (as documented by the BICI report);
9. Calls on the VP/HR and the Member States to work together to develop a clear strategy to actively push for the release of prisoners of conscience, and to adopt Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on the human rights situation in Bahrain, which should include a specific call for the immediate and unconditional release of political prisoners three of whom Abdulhadi al-Khawaja, Zainab al-Khawaja, and Mohammed al-Muqdad are European citizens;
10. Welcomes the decision by the Arab League to set up an Arab Human Rights Court in Manama and expresses its hope that it may act as a catalyst for human rights across the region; urges the Government of Bahrain, as well as its partners in the Arab League, to ensure the integrity, impartiality, efficiency and credibility of this Court;
11. 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 government and parliaments of the Member States and the Government and Parliament of the Kingdom of Bahrain.