

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

24.4.2007

B6-0184/2007

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Ioannis Kasoulides, Rodi Kratsa-Tsagaropoulou, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Simon Coveney, Charles Tannock

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on the kidnapping in Gaza of the journalist Alan Johnston

European Parliament resolution on the kidnapping in Gaza of the journalist Alan Johnston

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on human rights and freedom of press,
 - having regards to Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the freedom of the press is of primary importance for democracy and respect for humans rights and fundamental freedoms, given its essential role in guaranteeing free expression of opinions and ideas and in contributing to peoples' effective participation in democratic processes,
- B. taking into consideration the growing frequency of abductions of journalists in zones of conflict and the fact that 11 foreign journalists have been kidnapped in the Gaza Strip since August 2005 while none of the abductors have been caught or prosecuted,
- C. reiterating that freedom of speech and expression are a fundamental part of the democratic process which Palestine has pioneered in the Arab world,
- D. noting that BBC correspondent, Alan Johnston, was one of the very few western reporters permanently based in Gaza for the past three years,
- E. stating that all journalists operating in conflict areas should be respected and protected in carrying out their vocation,
1. Utterly condemns the heinous crime of kidnapping as a means of political or financial gain;
 2. Calls for the immediate release of BBC journalist, Alan Johnston, who was seized on his way home, in Gaza, on 12 March 2007;
 3. Urges the Palestinian authorities and all other organisations that may possibly help, to do everything in their power to secure the release of Alan Johnston;
 4. Reaffirms its conviction that freedom of expression and the freedom of press are fundamental rights and that without the presence of independent media in conflict zones arbitrary rule and violence are more likely to prevail;
 5. Urges all sides in Gaza to respect the right of journalists covering the conflict to work in

safety and free from fear of harm and believes that those who are holding Alan Johnston hostage do so to the detriment of the Palestinian people and their cause;

6. Calls on the EU and the International community to support the Palestinian authorities in their efforts to establish the rule of law in the Gaza Strip;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the President of the Palestinian Authority and the Palestinian Legislative Council.