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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 André Brie, Vittorio Agnoletto

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on human rights in Syria

European Parliament resolution on human rights in Syria

The European Parliament,

- having regard its previous resolutions on Syria,
- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas Anwar al-Bunni, a human rights lawyer who was arrested on 17 May 2006 by officials from the State Security (*Amn al-Dawla*) after signing a petition on 12 May 2006, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment on 24 April, after a trial inconsistent with the internationally accepted standards of fair trial since he was not given full access to his lawyers,

B. whereas MM. Michel Kilo, President of the Organisation for the Defence of Freedom of Speech and Press and Mahmoud Issa were also arrested after signing the Damascus- Beirut Declaration on 12 May 2006 and condemned on 13 May 2007 to three years in prison for 'weakening the national ethic' following dubious proceedings,

C. whereas following the information received by Human Rights organisations, Suleiman Shummar and Khalil Hussein were also condemned on the same date with MM. Michel Kilo and Mahmoud Issa, without a standing trial taking place, to ten years' imprisonment for 'weakening the national ethnic' and 'conspiring with a foreign country',

D. whereas, such actions represent a serious violation of human rights and aggravation of the freedom of expression, of respect for the international principle of no torture, of elements of daily repression as well as limitation to the activity of political opponents and human rights activists,

E. whereas the Human Rights Watch World Report of 2007, in addition to other Human Rights organisations, confirmed that the human rights situation in Syria continued to deteriorate further in 2006, noting that 'thousands of political prisoners, many of them members of the banned Muslim Brotherhood and Communist Party remained in Detention', and whereas the numbers and names of several detainees, held incommunicado, remain unknown,

F. whereas it is alleged that the trials held were highly political, and Anwar al- Bunni has instructed his lawyer not to appeal against the decision for that same reason,

G. whereas Syria is a state party to the UN and more particularly to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified on 21 April 1969 and the UN Convention against Torture, ratified on 19 August 2004,

1. Urges the Syrian authorities to ensure the review of controversial procedures, the immediate and unconditional release of Anwar al-Bunni and other activists, political opponents, intellectuals and human rights defenders;
2. Expresses its concern regarding the reasons behind the arrest and condemnation of the above mentioned people, as well as of other prisoners, and asks the Syrian authorities not to

practice incommunicado detentions;

3. Calls on the Syrian authorities to ensure that while in detention all prisoners are treated according to humanitarian and international law and are not subject to torture or other ill-treatment;

4. Notes that respect for human rights is a component of Syria's obligations under international human rights conventions;

5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Syrian Government and Parliament.