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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 Adam Bielan, Salvatore Tatarella, Hanna Foltyn-Kubicka, Ryszard Czarnecki, Ewa Tomaszewska, Konrad Szymański, Marcin Libicki

on behalf of the UEN Group

on deterioration of fundamental rights in Egypt

European Parliament resolution on deterioration of fundamental rights in Egypt

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Joint Action Plan signed between the European Union and Egypt in March 2007 within the framework of the European Neighbourhood Policy
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on Egypt and in particular its Resolution on the Ayman Nour case adopted on April 6 2006;
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure
- A whereas Egypt is one of the major actor in the peace process in the Middle East and one of the most trustful and active country of the area in the fight against international terrorism and fundamentalism and whereas Egypt has itself been the target of both plagues;
- B whereas one of the fundamental goals of the European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan is to support reforms in the area of democracy, human rights and justice, although there are no specific and clear benchmarks in this Plan;
- C whereas a portion of the 558 million Euro assistance package promised to Egypt should be used to reinforce good and democratic governance and are conditional on the Egyptian government taking concrete steps in this direction;
- D whereas after the signature of the Plan the situation on human rights not only has not improved but has progressively deteriorated in some spheres as it has been proved by recent initiatives taken by the government;
- E whereas the new amendments to the country's Constitution suspended constitutional guarantees to right to privacy, security of person and home;
- F whereas the Egyptian government has recently moved to close down several highly regarded human rights organizations, including the Association for Human Rights Legal Aid which provides legal assistance to victims of serious abuses;
- G whereas over the past weeks there have been serious infringements of the rights to freedom and expression and freedom of press, illustrated by the cases of some journalists and editors sentenced to prison for having published "untrue information";
- H whereas the opposition presidential candidate Ayman Nour is still serving a five-year sentence following an unfair trial in 2005 on politically motivated charges and whereas his health is deteriorating as a consequence of this imprisonment;

- I whereas torture remains a serious problem in Egyptian prisons and detention facilities and these cases are not investigated and remain unpunished;
- J whereas the prosecutors decided to close the inquiry into the police assaults on 30 December 2005 on Sudanese protestors - refugees, asylum seekers and migrants - in Cairo that resulted in the death of 27 persons and injured scores more;
- K whereas Egyptian border guards often shot and kill migrants attempting to leave the country and cross the border into Israel, which should be considered an excessive and illegal use of force and out of all proportion to any legitimate interest in maintaining border controls;
- L whereas all these events have to be considered excessive and disproportional to the risks of terrorism, turmoil and instability, and show a plan of the Egyptian authorities to limit freedoms in the country, which is causing the human rights situation to deteriorate;
- 1 Stresses the importance of the role played by Egypt and the strong efforts made by the country for ensuring stability in the area, bringing forward the peace process in Middle East and helping fighting against terrorism and fundamentalism; nevertheless considers that the recent wave of arrests and action against NGOs and human rights defenders is not justified and undermines the commitments subscribed to by the Egyptian government concerning fundamental rights and freedom as well as the steps towards a democratic process in the country;
- 2 Regrets the recent infringements of the rights of freedom of expression and freedom which have determined unlawful charges against journalists and editors and calls for them and other political prisoners to be freed,
- 3 Pleads in particular in favour of the immediate liberation of Mr Ayman Nour - who medical condition in jail has worsened - who has been arrested for allegedly falsified registration for his party in the occasion of presidential elections, charges which can be considered not only false but ludicrous,
- 4 Calls on the Political Sub Committee on human rights between the EU and Egypt in its next meeting in January to include in its agenda the issues linked to the respect of international human rights standard, the abolition of torture, freedom of expression, association and media, women's rights and the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers,
- 5 Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the government of Egypt.