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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 Marios Matsakis, Jules Maaten, Marco Cappato, Toomas Savi

on behalf of the ALDE Group

on the case of Roxana Saberi, American-Iranian journalist detained in Tehran

European Parliament resolution on the case of Roxana Saberi, American-Iranian journalist detained in Tehran

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran, in particular those concerning human rights,
 - having regard to the third interparliamentary meeting between the European Parliament and the Majlis (Parliament) of the Islamic Republic of Iran, held in Brussels on 4 and 5 November 2008, and the report thereon,
 - having regards to the statements issued by the Council Presidency on 20 April 2009 on the threats against Roxana Saberi
 - having regard to the previous resolutions of the UN General Assembly, in particular Resolution 63/191 of 18 December 2008 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,
 - having regard to the report by the UN Secretary-General of 1 October 2008 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, to all of which Iran is a party,
 - whereas the European Union is deeply concerned about the sentence pronounced by the Iranian Revolutionary Court on 18 April 2009 against Miss Roxana Saberi for alleged espionage.
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the general human rights situation in Iran has continued to deteriorate since 2005 in all areas and respects, in particular as regards the exercise of civil rights and political freedoms, despite the fact that Iran has undertaken to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms under the various international instruments in this field,
- B. whereas Roxana Saberi, Iranian-American freelance journalist based in Iran, was sentenced on 18 April 2009 to eight years in prison after she was convicted in a closed-door trial of being an American spy,
- C. whereas Saberi had been held in prison for more than two months and the charges against her were changed twice before her trial finally began on 20 April

- D. whereas initially picked up for buying alcohol, which is a crime in Iran, Saberi was later cited for working as a journalist without legal credentials. Earlier this month, days before her trial, Iranian officials announced the far more serious charges of espionage.
- E. whereas Roxana Saberi had no access to a lawyer for five weeks and has not received a fair and transparent trial,
- F. whereas the lawyer of Roxana Saberi has filed an appeal against her conviction as his client maintains her innocence on all charges,
- G. whereas Saberi has herself been on hunger strike since 21 April and, according to her father, Reza Saberi, who visited her in Tehran's Evin prison on 27 April, she is determined and ready to go all the way
- H. whereas the European Union considers that the judicial process to which Miss Saberi was subjected did not meet the standards of a fair and transparent trial and calls urgently on the Iranian authorities to release Miss Saberi.
1. Strongly condemns the sentencing for espionage of Roxana Saberi; notes that there was no evidence of espionage made public and her trial was conducted in secret,
 2. Urges the Iranian authorities to release Roxana Saberi immediately and unconditionally on the basis that the trial was held in camera without legal due process according to international norms;
 3. Urges the Iranian government to rescind the charges against Saberi immediately and release her from prison as it cannot produce convincing evidence against her.
 4. Calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with all international human rights instruments ratified by Iran, especially with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Universal Declaration of Human Rights which both guarantee the right to fair trial.
 5. Urges the Council and Commission to continue their examination of the human rights situation in Iran and to submit to it in the first half of 2009 a comprehensive report on the matter and to continue to raise specific cases of human rights abuses;
 6. Emphasises that the possible future conclusion of a Cooperation and Trade Agreement between Iran and the EU depends also on a substantial improvement in the human rights situation in Iran;
 7. Calls on the Council Presidency and the Members States' diplomatic representatives in Iran urgently to undertake concerted action with regard to the above-mentioned concerns;
 8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Human Rights Council,

the Head of the Judiciary of Iran and the Government and Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran.