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B7-0454/2011

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain in the context of the situation in the Arab world and North Africa

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on behalf of the S&D Group

B7-0454/2011

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain in the context of the situation in the Arab world and North Africa

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolution on the situation in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain of 7 April 2011,
- having regard to its previous resolution on Tunisia, Egypt and Libya,
- having regard to its report on European Union relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council of 24 March 2011,
- having regard to the Council’s conclusions on Syria and on Yemen of 20 June 2011,
- having regard to the statements of the High Representative/Vice-President of the Commission on Syria of 18, 22, 24, and 26 March; on Yemen of 10, 12, and 18 March 2011; and on Bahrain of 10, 15, and 17 March and 3 May,
- having regard to the statement of the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, on the sentences against 21 Bahraini political activists, human rights defenders and opposition leaders of 23 June 2011,
- having regard to its resolution of 16 December 2010 on the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World 2009 and the European Union’s policy on the matter annual reports on the situation of Human Rights in the world,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, to which Syria, Yemen and Bahrain are parties,
- having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1975, to which Syria, Yemen and Bahrain are parties,
- having regard to the Geneva Convention of 28 July 1951 and the Protocol of 31 January 1967 relating to the Status of Refugees,
- having regard to the Joint Communication by the High Representative and the Commission on ‘A new response to a changing Neighbourhood’ of 25 May 2011 which complements the Joint Communication on ‘A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean’ of 8 March 2011,
- having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. whereas, winds of change continue to blow across the Arab world; whereas demonstrations in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain continue to call for genuine democracy and political, economic and social reforms, for fighting corruption and nepotism, for ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, for reducing social inequalities, and for creating better economic and social conditions,
- B. whereas the EU without reservation condemns tyranny and oppression whenever it occurs; whereas those regimes that use violence against their own people lose legitimacy and have to listen to the calls for change, respond with concrete reforms or leave the power,
- C. whereas the Joint Communication on a new response to a changing Neighbourhood of 25 May 2011 sets out a fresh trend, updating the views for the implementation of the basic principles of the Union's external action, namely the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, at the centre of the Neighbourhood Policy while reflecting the need for the EU to support the democratic change in North Africa and in the Middle East,

Syria

- D. whereas since beginning of the crackdown in Syria in March 2011, violence is escalating and moreover security forces respond to the continuous protests with mass arrests and increasing brutality killing more than 400 civilians in the Daraa governorate alone and more than 850 in total across Syria,
- E. whereas security forces launched a large scale operation and campaign in Daraa and neighbouring towns, notably in Jisr al-Shugour, where an estimated 15 000 Syrians had to cross the Syrian border fearing reprisals by the security forces; whereas Turkey has expressed great concern over Syria's deployment of troops and tanks near the boarder; Whereas large number of Syrian refugees are crossing the border on daily basis to Turkey and Turkey is trying to meet all the needs of the refugees,
- F. whereas the Council on 23 June adopted decision and a regulation imposing restrictive measures on seven additional persons added to the list set out on 9 May introducing special measures, such as visa ban and freezing of assets and also imposed an embargo on arms and equipment which might be used for internal repression, against four entities associated with the Syrian regime in view of the gravity of the situation in the country,
- G. whereas President Bashar al-Assad said in his third address of 20 June 2011 that a national dialogue would shape Syria's future; whereas despite repeated commitments to political reforms and changes in Syria, the authorities have failed to take any step to fulfil them,
- H. whereas there is a serious risk for the rise of violent attacks coming from extremist groups; whereas it is important to ensure protection for the various religious communities in Syria,

Yemen

- I. whereas the situation in Yemen remains of deep concern following months of violence and turmoil that have inflicted substantial suffering on the Yemeni people, resulting in

serious loss of life and injuries, and imprisonment of protesters as well as deepened economic and political crisis in the country,

- J. whereas the GCC has initiated a plan for peaceful transition of power which has not yet been implemented by all parts, both the President Saleh and the opposition,
- K. whereas during recent attacks on his compound on June 3, the President of Yemen, Ali Abdullah Saleh was seriously injured and the power has been temporarily transferred to the Vice-President of the country, Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi,
- L. whereas Yemen is the poorest country in the Middle East with dwindling oil reserves, a growing population, weak central government, growing water shortages and little investment in the country's economy; whereas there is serious concern for the disintegration of the Yemeni states with a fragile truce since February with the Shiite rebels in the North, a secessionist movement in the South and many Qaeda fighters,

Bahrain

- M. whereas on the 22 May two men, Ali 'Abdullah Hassan al-Sankis and 'Abdulaziz 'Abdulridha Ibrahim Hussain, were sentenced to death for killing two policemen during anti-government protests in Bahrain; whereas the execution decision was postponed until September,
- N. whereas a military court in Bahrain sentenced 8 opposition activists to life in prison and 13 received jail sentences of up to 15 years for 'plotting to topple the government'; whereas many other political activists, human rights defenders and journalists were detained during the recent pro-reform protests, whereas according to human rights organisations they have been tortured, ill-treated and harassed,
- O. whereas 47 Bahraini doctors and nurses were accused for 'incitement to overthrow the regime by force' and faced trial by Bahraini military court; whereas the medical professionals acted under professional duty and treated injured people,
- P. whereas on the 29th June an independent commission was set up by King Hamad in order to investigate human rights violations during recent government crackdowns on pro-reform protesters,
- Q. whereas a consultation for national dialogue was launched under the initiative of King Hamad Bin Eisa Al Khalifa,
- R. whereas following the request of the Bahraini government, foreign forces under the banner of the Gulf Cooperation Council have been deployed in Bahrain,

The Arab world

- S. whereas the forthcoming democratic elections in Tunisia and Egypt represent the first important step in the ongoing transition process towards democracy,
- T. whereas in Morocco the King announced, following an open peaceful process, the main elements of the new Constitution that were voted in a referendum on 1 July 2011,

- U. whereas in Algeria steps must be taken by the Authorities towards a genuine political and inclusive dialogue to launch a serious process of democratic reforms,
- V. whereas in Jordan a process of the review of the Constitution and political reform process has been launched by the Authorities in an effort to ensure the participation of political and civil society representatives in a national dialogue,
- W. whereas after the adoption of the UNSCRs 1970 and 1973, the Gaddafi regime remains in constant breach of its obligation to protect Libyan citizens; whereas the international community, including some EU Member States, is acting militarily in Libya under NATO; whereas EU has established its representation in Benghazi as well as promoted contacts with National Transitional Council,
1. Calls on the political leaderships of Arab countries to meet their commitments by engaging in an open and constructive political dialogue involving all democratic political parties and movements as well as civil society without delay or precondition aimed at paving the way for genuine democracy, and the implementation of real, ambitious and significant political, economic, and social reforms, which are essential for long-term stability and development in these countries and in the region;
 2. Praises the people for the courage demonstrated in their fight for democratic change and in particular the women that have been and often remain at the forefront of the protests;
 3. Underlines the need for the EU member states to adopt a single voice in international fora, and particularly in the UN Security Council, in defence of the basic principles which have inspired the foundation of the European Union;

Syria

4. Expresses its solidarity and its firm support to the struggle of the Syrian people for freedom, democratic changes and the end of the authoritarian regime;
5. Strongly condemns the escalating use of brutal repression against peaceful protesters and journalists taking into account the siege imposed on cities like Daraa and Jish al Shoughour including the mass arrests and the extrajudicial killings, the arbitrary detention and the torture; welcomes the UN Human Rights Council resolution to decide to send a fact finding mission to Syria to investigate the human rights violations perpetrated by the Syrian security forces;
6. Urges the Syrian authorities and President Bashar al Assad to put an end to the killings on innocent people and to engage in an immediate and genuine political process in order to contribute to a democratic transition in Syria based on a concrete agenda for fundamental reforms and the respect for human rights and the rule of law;
7. Calls for strict application of the sanctions already decided by international community and European Union against Syria and its main authorities; asks the Council and the Commission to stand ready to set up new targeted sanctions and to stick with the decision to suspend any negotiations over the EU-Syria Association Agreement;

8. Welcomes Turkey's policy to maintain open borders for Syrian refugees and the rapid organisation and mobilisation of the Red Crescent's resources;
9. Calls on the Council and the Commission to immediately provide aid and all necessary means to support to the Turkish and Lebanese authorities in their efforts to manage the humanitarian crisis at their borders with Syria, including by setting up a humanitarian corridor at UN level, calls for solidarity in funds and means in managing the humanitarian efforts of Turkey;
10. Calls on the EU Member States and on the HR/VP to continue working with its international partners for an involvement of the UN Security Council on the situation in Syria and for the enforcement by Syrian authorities of its responsibility to protect Syrian population;
11. Calls in this regard on the HR/VP, the Council and the Commission to encourage the process of emerging opposition inside and outside the country in supporting the Syrian revolution; calls in this regard for the urgent start of a genuine political dialogue leading to in-depth democratic process in Syria;

Yemen

12. Expresses its support for Vice-President Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi's commitment to respect the ceasefire, to demilitarise Yemen's cities, and to ensure proper protection for any further peaceful protests and demonstrations;
13. Condemns the repression and urges the Yemeni leadership to proceed with an immediate peaceful political transition in the country, in line with the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, and to respond to the legitimate interests of the people as well as the organisation of free and fair election;
14. Calls on all political forces to meet their commitments by engaging in an open and constructive political dialogue involving all democratic political parties and movements as well as civil society;
15. Expresses its serious concern about the increasingly bad humanitarian situation in Yemen, including the internal displacement of many thousands of people;
16. Insists on the implementation of real, ambitious and significant political, economic, and social reforms, which are essential for long-term stability and development of the country;

Bahrain

17. Calls on the Bahraini authorities to commute the death sentences of Ali 'Abdullah Hassan al-Sankis and 'Abdulaziz 'Abdulridha Ibrahim Hussain; calls on the Bahraini authorities to reinstate the de facto moratorium on capital punishment;
18. Condemns the repression and urges for the immediate and unconditional release of all peaceful demonstrators including political activists, journalists and human rights defenders and of the 47 Bahraini doctors and nurses who were under their professional

duty; expresses its strong concern on the life sentences of 8 opposition activists and 13 who received up to 15 years in prison;

19. Urges the Bahraini authorities to act in strict accordance with the international human rights obligations, particularly regarding the right to a fair trial and which Bahrain has signed up to; calls for an immediate cessation of trials of civilians in the Court of National Safety;
20. Takes note of King Hamad's decision to set up an independent commission to investigate human rights violations during recent government crackdowns on pro-reform protesters; urges for the full impartiality and transparency of the commission and calls on the Bahraini government not to interfere in its work;
21. Welcomes the setting up of a Ministry for Human Rights and Social Development in Bahrain, and calls upon the Ministry to act according to international human rights standards and obligations;
22. Strongly supports King Hamad's decision to lift the state of emergency in the country on 1 June and calls for its full respect, to refrain from the use of violence against demonstrators, to respect their freedom of assembly and expression, and to guarantee their security;
23. Considers that the national dialogue launched by King Hamad could be only possible with the participation of all political forces including the opposition and civil society aimed at paving the way for genuine democracy and political reforms in the country;
24. Expresses its disapproval on the deployment of GCC troops in Bahrain and reiterates its call for their immediate withdrawal;
25. Urges the government of Bahrain to guarantee full respect for the freedom of religion in the country;

The Arab world

26. Welcomes the ongoing democratic transition process in Egypt and Tunisia, as the first examples of the current process of democratisation and new wave of participation by citizens and notably youth in the Arab world; strongly supports the aspirations of people for freedom, human rights and democracy; calls for a transparent, fair and free election process in both countries; calls on the international community to make further efforts to sustain and encourage the process of political reform in countries in North Africa and the Middle East;
27. Welcomes the referendum of a new Constitution in Morocco, which was a significant step and signalled a clear commitment to democracy and respect for human rights and was a legitimate vote by the citizens; stresses that the citizens, and the civil society organisations should remain at the centre of the continuing implementation process of the reforms;
28. Takes note of the announcement by the President of Algeria to launch a process in view of democratisation and to ensure a better governance of the country, including the lifting of

the state of emergency and a planned constitutional reform; underlines the need to accelerate such an initiative and calls for a strong commitment of the Algerian authorities to this process of reforms, which should be inclusive, and open to the civil society;

29. Welcomes the commitment of the Authorities to political reforms in Jordan, and in particular the announcement of the review of the Constitution and the work of the National Dialogue Committee; commends the efforts made by the Jordanian Authorities and emphasises the need for concrete implementation of reforms;
30. Is worried about the hardship that the Libyan population is facing, due to shortage of food, lack of access to medical aid and lack of cash flows to pay salaries and to respond to various administrative needs; calls on the HR/VP and EU Member States to act urgently to make available to the TNC, under authorisation and supervision of the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee, part of the frozen Libyan assets, so that the emergency needs are assured;
31. Calls on the Council and the HR/VP to take further initiatives to work out a solution to the conflict taking into account the recent ICC arrest warrant against Colonel Gaddafi, his son Saif al-Islam and Abdullah al-Sanussi;
32. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission and High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Member Countries of the Maghreb and Mashrek delegations and of the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the UN Human Rights Council.