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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 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Bahrain

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

European Parliament resolution on Bahrain

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Syria, Yemen and Bahrain, in particular that of 7 April 2011 on the situation in Syria, Bahrain and Yemen,
- having regard to its resolution of 24 March 2011 on European Union relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council,
- having regard to the statements by its President of 12 April 2011 on the death of two Bahraini civil activists and of 28 April 2011 condemning the death sentences lodged against four Bahrainis for participating in peaceful protests,
- having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative (VP/HR) on Bahrain of 10, 12 and 18 March 2011; 3 May and 1 July 2011; 31 August 2011, 8 and 30 September 2011 and the statements by the HR/VP on the situation in Egypt, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain at the European Parliament on 12 October 2011,
- having regard to the statement of 23 June and 30 September 2011 by the UN Secretary-General on the sentences imposed on 21 Bahraini political activists, human rights defenders and opposition leaders,
- having regard to the statement on Bahrain by 66th UN General Assembly on 29 September 2011; (double check),
- having regard the press statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain on 5 October 2011 and the statement by the Bahrain Ministry of Health on the Sentencing of Doctors, Nurses and Medics on 30 September 2011,
- having regard to the statement by the Bahraini Public Prosecutor regarding the retrial of doctors previously prosecuted in military trials on 23 October 2011,
- having regard to the public briefing paper by Doctors ‘Health Services paralyzed: Bahrain's military crackdown on patients in April 2011’,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 to which Bahrain is party,
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders of 2004, as updated in 2008,
- having regard the Convention against Torture ratified by Bahrain in 1998,
- having regard to the 1949 Geneva Convention,

- having regard the Human rights Watch report issued February 2010,
 - having regard to Rule 122(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in February 2011 a Bahraini popular movement organized peaceful demonstration calling for reforms, freedom and the insurance of basic human rights, whereas these peaceful demonstrations were ruthlessly crushed with excessive use of force by the Bahraini authorities, killing dozens of protestors, and whereas the international community reacted to slow and weak;
- B. whereas following a request from the Bahraini Government thousands of foreign forces from Saudi Arabia and the UAE under the banner of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have been deployed in Bahrain;
- C. whereas the state of national safety in Bahrain was lifted on 1 June 2011 and King Hamad Bin Isa al-Khalifa made a call for a national dialogue, which formally began on 2 July 2011;
- D. whereas on 29 June 2011 the Bahrain Independent Commission of Enquiry (BICI), including an international independent component was set up by King Hamad in order to investigate the grave human rights violations by the Bahraini security forces during the demonstrations in February 2011, whereas the BICI will publish its findings on 30 October 2011;
- E. whereas on 22 May 2011 the death sentences imposed on Ali Abdullah Hassan al-Sankis and Abdulaziz Abdulridha Ibrahim Hussain accused of killing two policemen during anti-government protests in Bahrain were upheld by the National Safety Court of Appeal; whereas the final judicial decision will be delivered on 24 October 2011 and if their death sentences are upheld, the two men will be executed unless the King grants them clemency executions have been postponed until September,
- F. whereas hundreds of teachers and medical professionals have been arrested, dismissed from their jobs and charged with false offences in mass trials before military courts,
- G. whereas the former vice-president of the Bahrain Teachers Association, Jalila al Salman has been arrested for a second time on 18 October 2011; whereas she was sentenced by the military court in September 2011 for participating in the teachers' strike and the peaceful protest at the Pearl Roundabout in Manamaan;
- H. whereas at least 20 doctors and paramedics were convicted by a military tribunal in late September to up to 15 years in prison for alleged antigovernment activities while treating injured protesters earlier this year; whereas due to the international pressure Bahrain's attorney general, Ali Alboainain, announced on Wednesday 5 October that the 20 should be retried before civil courts, which trials will resume 28 November 2011;

- I. Whereas a number of the sentenced doctors were trained in EU Member States and belong to EU based professional medical organizations and enjoy a good reputation among international colleagues;
- J. whereas following the medical ethic all patients have a right to seek and receive treatment in safe environment and all medical staff have a fundamental duty to administer treatment without discrimination;
- K. whereas due to the crackdown on peaceful demonstrations, on doctors and paramedics that began in February 2011 hospitals and health clinics are no longer considered places to go for sick or injured, but rather places to be feared, as wounded are used to identify demonstrators, restricted access to health care is being used to deter people from protesting, and those who dare to seek treatment in health facilities are being arrested;
- L. Whereas the targeted crackdown on doctors and paramedics has serious implications for the work of international humanitarian organizations;
- M. whereas the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights condemned the takeover by security forces of medical facilities and arbitrary arrests and ill-treatment of medical personnel as shocking and illegal;
- N. whereas Human rights associations have documented many human rights violations, including acts of torture, against hundreds of detainees, including journalists, bloggers and human rights defenders; whereas cases of online censorship and website blocking have been noted;
- O. whereas the military-run National Safety Court of Appeal confirmed the convictions of academic, blogger, and human rights activist Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace and human rights defender Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, dismissing all appeals of 14 human rights activists, writers, and bloggers during the hearing; whereas Dr. Al-Singace and Al-Khawaja were sentenced to life imprisonment and are believed to have been targeted for calling for political reform and for their reporting of human rights abuses in the country;
- P. whereas on 22 June 2011, 21 Bahraini human rights activists and opposition members faced strong sentences by the National Safety Court that was set up to prosecute those who voiced their opinion and demanded protection of their basic human rights;
- Q. whereas on 18 August 2011, the Bahraini authorities reversed the decision by the special court and adopted Royal decree “no. 28, 2011”, laying down that: “the ordinary courts take over all the cases of misdemeanours and appeals relating to them that were not adjudicated in a final verdict by the National Safety Court”;
- R. whereas on 6 September 2011 the National Safety Appeal Court confirmed the sentences against 21 political leaders and human rights activists;
- S. whereas the United States government on 19 October 2011 announced that it would await the findings of the BICI before pursuing an USD 53 million arms deal with the Gulf Kingdom of Bahrain;

1. Condemns the repression of citizens in Bahrain that has already lead to more than 40 deaths and many injured, and urges the immediate and unconditional release of all peaceful demonstrators, human rights defenders, doctors and paramedics, bloggers and journalists and expresses its solidarity with the families of all the victims;
2. Reiterates its view that demonstrators have expressed their legitimate democratic aspirations and calls on the Bahraini government to engage in a meaningful and constructive dialogue with the opposition, without further delay or additional preconditions, in order to bring about the necessary reforms, encourage national reconciliation and to restore social consensus in the country; calls on all parties to participate in the National Dialogue and to establish serious and concrete confidence-building measures;
3. Condemns the use of Special military courts to try civilians; stress that civilians must be tried in civilian courts and that every detained person delete: (must be charged with a recognizable criminal offence) deserves a fair trial, with adequate access to a lawyer and enough time to prepare a defence;
4. Calls on Bahraini authorities to put an end to mass trials of civilians, doctors, paramedics, human rights defenders, bloggers and journalists before military courts;
5. Cautions against the abuse of national security laws;
6. Welcomes the decision to retry in civil courts the trials against doctors and nurses, who were acting under professional duty and have been accused of tending to the medical needs to those who oppose the regime, as well as of serious criminal offenses which seem to have a political nature and for which credible evidence has not been put forward and calls on the civilian courts to then drop all charges and to free the doctors and paramedics, as well as all other political prisoners;
7. Urges the immediate and unconditional release of all political activists, journalists, teachers, and human rights defenders and bloggers due to the arbitrary nature of the charges and of the entire proceedings; expresses its strong concern at the life sentences for at least eight opposition activists and at the 15-year prison sentences for at least 13 others;
8. Calls on the authorities to restore and respect all fundamental freedoms, including the pluralism in the media both online and offline, freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly, and to put an end to the censorship;
9. Notes that thousands of employees have lost their jobs for their participation in the peaceful anti-Government protests; calls on the national authorities as well as the involved European enterprises to order the immediate reintegration of these individuals and to ensure that they are compensated for their lost income;
10. Welcomes King Hamad's decision to set up an independent commission to investigate the human rights violations by the security forces during the government crackdown on peaceful pro-reform protesters; urges full impartiality and transparency for the commission and calls on the Bahraini Government not to interfere in its work and to ensure that perpetrators of crimes and all persons responsible for the violent crackdown, are brought to justice and tried by due process;

11. Calls on the Kingdom of Bahrain to allow all medics to resume their jobs and allow all medics and their defence teams access to the medical examination reports from the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry's examination of the detained doctors;
12. Calls on the inclusion of international observers to the trials of political prisoners as well as to the work of the independent commission investigating human rights violations to ensure objectivity according to international standards;
13. Welcomes the setting-up of a Ministry for Human Rights and Social Development in Bahrain, and calls on that ministry to act in accordance with international human rights standards and obligations;
14. Calls on the Bahraini authorities to allow the High Commissioner for Human Rights office to visit Bahrain and to secure a follow up to the Independent Commission's findings within the Human Rights Council;
15. Welcomes the decision by the U.S. Government to delay the sale of 53 million dollars of arms to Bahrain and encourages the freezing of any arms trade until respect for human rights in Bahrain is credibly guaranteed;
16. Underlines the importance of reconciliation as an essential part of reform and stability in Bahrain's diverse society in which the rights of each citizen should be equally guaranteed in both letter and practice of the law;
17. Expresses its concern at the presence of foreign troops under the GCC banner in Bahrain and calls on their immediate withdrawal; reiterates its call on the GCC to contribute resources as a regional collective player in order to act constructively and mediate in the interest of peaceful reforms in Bahrain;
18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of the Kingdom of Bahrain.