



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

---

*Plenary sitting*

---

15.11.2011

B7-0605/2011

## 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 Egypt, notably the case of blogger Alaa Abd El Fatah

**Marietje Schaake, Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, Louis Michel, Robert Rochefort, Edward McMillan-Scott, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Marielle De Sarnez, Sonia Alfano, Alexandra Thein, Leonidas Donskis, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Sarah Ludford, Kristiina Ojuland, Niccolò Rinaldi, Ivo Vajgl, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen, Frédérique Ries**  
on behalf of the ALDE Group

**European Parliament resolution on Egypt, notably the case of blogger Alaa Abd El Fatah**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Egypt in particular of 17 February 2011 on the situation in Egypt, and of 27 October 2011 on the situation in Egypt and Syria, in particular of Christian communities,
  - having regard to its annual reports on the situation of human rights in the world, and in particular to its resolution of 16 December 2010 on the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World 2009,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and in particular its Article 18 and to Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, to which Egypt is party,
  - having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on Egypt and in particular those on the violence in Egypt on 10 October 2011, and the statements on the situation in Egypt, Syria, Yemen and Bahrain in the European Parliament on 12 October 2011,
  - having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council Conclusions of 10 October 2011, having regard to the European Council Conclusions on Egypt on 23 October 2011,
  - having regard to the announcement by the Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy of the adoption of a programme supporting the development of agricultural Small and Medium Enterprises on 8 November 2011,
  - having regard to the EU-Egypt Association Agreement from 2004 and the Action Plan agreed in 2007,
  - having regard to the Joint Communication on ‘A new response to a changing neighbourhood’ of the European Commission and the HR/VP to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of Regions of 25 May 2011,
  - having regard to the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders,
  - having regard to Rule 122(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Egypt is going through a critical period of democratic transition and faces considerable challenges and difficulties in this process;

- B. whereas human rights organisations report that more than 12.000 civilians have been tried before military tribunals since March 2011 in Egypt; whereas civilians arrested under the emergency law continue to be tried before military tribunals, which fall short of the minimum international standards of fair trial and the right to defence;
- C. whereas the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (“SCAF”) has failed to conduct an investigation into the reports of sexual assault of female protestors, including the so-called ‘virginity checks’ and death threats against female protestors;
- D. whereas none of the security forces involved in the lethal Maspero violence on 9 October 2011 has been held accountable;
- E. whereas Egyptian blogger Alaa Abd El Fattah was summoned by Egypt’s military prosecutors for interrogation at the premises of the C28 headquarters in Cairo on Monday 24 October 2011; whereas he was subsequently arrested on 30 October 2011 to face charges of inciting violence against the armed forces, assaulting military personnel, destroying public property, stealing military weapons and damaging military property during the recent Maspero clashes that took place on 9 October 2011 in Cairo; whereas 30 other civilians have been detained in the same court case;
- F. whereas he refused to answer the military authorities or to acknowledge their legitimacy due to his opposition to civilians being tried before military tribunals; whereas the military prosecutor ordered his provisional detention for 15 days, a period that can be renewed indefinitely by the military authorities, in the prison of Bab El Khalq pending further investigation;
- G. whereas the military appeal court confirmed his pre-trial detention on 3 November 2011 and he has been transferred to Torah prison; whereas a new 15-day detention was handed down on 3 November 2011;
- H. whereas on 6 November 2011 his mother went on hunger strike to protest against her son's detention; whereas on 10 November 2011 six others have joined the hunger strike.
- I. whereas on 2 November 2011 the military rulers promised to pardon 344 civilians convicted in military courts, amid mounting pressure following Alaa Abd El Fattah imprisonment and the publication of a secret letter from his jail cell accusing the country's military rulers of murder and lamenting what he views as the army's hijacking of the revolution;
- J. whereas Alaa Abd El Fattah was previously detained under the Mubarak regime for 45 days in 2006 after participating in a protest in support of an independent judiciary;
- K. whereas social media have played an important role in Arab Spring events including in Egypt; whereas Alaa Abd El Fattah's detention is only the latest example of the systematic targeting, harassment and intimidation against bloggers, journalists, political activists and human rights defenders in Egypt,
- L. whereas imprisoned blogger Maikel Nabil Sanad continues his hunger strike and is in a critical condition; whereas the military appeal court decided to annul his sentence of

three years of imprisonment and ordered a re-trial on 11 October 2011; whereas, at the second hearing of this new procedure on 1 November 2011, his trial has been postponed to 13 November 2011 as he persisted to refuse cooperation with the military tribunal on the basis of his opposition to civilians being tried before military courts; whereas on 13 November 2011 his trial has been postponed to 27 November 2011;

- M. whereas on 28 October 2011 the 24-year-old Essam Atta died in Cairo's Qasr El-Eini hospital, after reportedly being tortured by prison guards in the Torah prison,
- N. whereas an international Day to defend the Egyptian revolution has been called on 12 November 2011 under the slogan "Defend the Egyptian revolution-End Military trials for civilians";
- O. whereas the HR/VP has failed to condemn the ongoing military trials of civilians, in particular the case of Alaa Abd El Fattah;
  - 1. Reiterates its solidarity with the Egyptian people in this critical period of democratic transition in the country and continues supporting their legitimate democratic aspirations; stresses again that the freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly, religion, conscience and thought are essential components of democracy;
  - 2. Repeats its call to the SCAF to put an end without delay to the emergency law and to military trials of civilians, and to immediately release all civilians and political prisoners held by military courts; stresses that civilians should not be prosecuted before military courts, which do not meet basic due process standards;
  - 3. Calls for the immediate release of Alaa Abd El Fattah and Maikel Nabil Sanad; expresses again its deep concerns about the health condition of Maikel Nabil; strongly condemns the torture and death of Essam Atta, calls on the Egyptian authorities to ensure that no blogger, journalist, political activist or human rights defender is subject to direct or indirect harassment or intimidation, in order to restrict the freedom of expression;
  - 4. Welcomes the decision of the SCAF to allow independent observers to witness the upcoming parliamentary elections, calls on the SCAF to also allow the monitoring of the elections;
  - 5. Reiterates its call for an independent, thorough and transparent investigation into the Maspero clashes that took place on 9 October 2011 in Cairo, which should be conducted by an independent and impartial civil judiciary, in order to hold all those responsible to account;
  - 6. Calls upon the HR/VP to demand from the Egyptian authorities the immediate lifting of the emergency laws, an immediate end to the military trials and to call for the immediate release of all civilians and political prisoners held by military courts, in particular Alaa Abd El Fattah and Maikel Nabil Sanad;

7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the HR/VP, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt;