



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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Plenary sitting

10.9.2013

B7-0418/2013

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Bahrain
(2013/2830(RSP))

Charles Tannock, Adam Bielan
on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Bahrain
(2013/2830(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the European Parliament resolution on Syria, Yemen and Bahrain, in particular that of 7 April 2011 on the situation in Syria, Bahrain and Yemen and that of 7 July 2011 on the situation in Syria, Yemen and Bahrain in the context of the situation in the Arab World and North Africa,
 - having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 24 March 2011 on European Union relations with the Gulf Cooperation Council,
 - having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 17 January 2013 on the human rights situation in Bahrain,
 - having regard to the Hearing on Bahrain in the European Parliament Human Rights Subcommittee on 3 October 2011,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Arab Charter on Human Rights, to all of which Bahrain is a party,
 - having regard to the European Parliament resolution of 15 March 2012 on human rights violations in Bahrain,
 - having regard to Article 19(d) of Bahrain's Constitution,
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders of 2004, as updated in 2008,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having to the 1949 Geneva Convention,
 - having regard to Rule 122(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the Delegation of the European Parliament's subcommittee on Human Rights to Bahrain 19 – 20 December 2012,
- A. Whereas on 14 February 2011 pro-democracy protests began in Bahrain when protesters took to the streets of Manama calling for democratic reforms, which resulted in a forceful response by security forces to curb protests;
- B. Whereas during the 2011 pro-democracy protests, hundreds of opposition leaders, pro-democracy activists, teachers, medical workers and students were arrested and held allegedly without access to legal counsel, and whereas a three month 'State of National

Safety' was established by Royal Decree on March 15 thereby establishing special military courts called 'National Safety Courts' to investigate and prosecute crimes that threatened the safety of the state; whereas these military courts comprised of a military officer and two civilian judges, tried hundreds of Bahrainis arrested during the course of democratic protests; whereas the state of national safety in Bahrain was lifted on 1 June 2011:

- D. Whereas on 23 November 2011 the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry presented its findings to the King of Bahrain; the report concluded that many people were on trial or had been sentenced to prison terms for exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly; whereas a number of recommendations were made in the BICI report including; making subject to review in ordinary courts all convictions and sentences rendered by the National Security Courts; the implementation of public order training for the public security forces, and in accordance with UN best practices; the review of convictions and to commute sentences of all persons charged with offences involving political expression, not consisting of advocacy of violence;
- E. Whereas 13 demonstrators had appealed their convictions following arrests made during and after the Arab Springs in 2011, whose sentences were handed down by a military-led tribunal created under temporary martial law, 8 of whom have been given life sentences;
1. Notes that all citizens of Bahrain should have the right to peacefully protest, and that all Bahraini's should have the right to express their views and opinions freely and peacefully, allowing for freedom of thought, expression and media,
 2. Recommends the immediate release of all peaceful demonstrators, political activists, human rights defenders, doctors and paramedics, bloggers and journalists;
 3. Acknowledges the efforts since 2011 of King Hamad Bin Isa al-Khalifa to launch a National Dialogue to address the concerns of Bahraini citizens in the wake of events of 2011, and urges the full implementation of the BICI recommendations;
 4. Welcomes King Hamad Bin Isa al-Khalifa's 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; particularly notes the progressive stance of Bahrain to women in society;
 5. Notes the formal establishment of a Police Ombudsman by the Bahraini Interior Ministry in July 2013, and expresses hope that this move could effectively look into complaints and grievances by Bahraini citizens;
 6. Welcomes King Hama Bin Isa al-Khalifa's setting-up of an independent commission for the rights of prisoners and detainees, and calls on this commission to effectively monitor and improve the conditions and treatment of prisoners and detainees,
 7. Notes the Bahraini government's ongoing efforts to reform the penal code and legal procedures, encourages this process to continue, and stresses that independence,

accountability and transparency are essential components of an effective judiciary;

8. Expresses hope that the establishment of the permanent headquarters of the Arab Human Rights Court in Bahrain could act as a catalyst for human rights across the region.
9. Notes the recent establishment of new rules regarding contacts with foreign diplomats and representatives, and hopes that these rules will not hinder constructive meetings which would not seek to adversely impact the security and stability of Bahrain;
10. 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 and the Government and Parliament of the Kingdom of Bahrain.