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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0763/2016**

7.6.2016

## **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 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Vietnam  
(2016/2755(RSP))

**Pier Antonio Panzeri, Josef Weidenholzer, Victor Boștinaru, Knut Fleckenstein, Eric Andrieu, Nikos Androulakis, Francisco Assis, Zigmantas Balčytis, Hugues Bayet, Brando Benifei, José Blanco López, Vilija Blinkevičiūtė, Simona Bonafè, Biljana Borzan, Nicola Caputo, Andrea Cozzolino, Andi Cristea, Viorica Dăncilă, Nicola Danti, Isabella De Monte, Jonás Fernández, Monika Flašíková Beňová, Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță, Eider Gardiazabal Rubial, Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg, Neena Gill, Michela Giuffrida, Enrique Guerrero Salom, Sylvie Guillaume, Sergio Gutiérrez Prieto, Richard Howitt, Cătălin Sorin Ivan, Liisa Jaakonsaari, Agnes Jongerius, Jude Kirton-Darling, Cécile Kshetu Kyenge, Arne Lietz, Krystyna Łybacka, Louis-Joseph Manscour, Costas Mavrides, Sorin Moisă, Alessia Maria Mosca, Victor Negrescu, Momchil Nekov, Demetris Papadakis, Vincent Peillon, Pina Picierno, Tonino Picula, Kati Piri, Miroslav Poche, Inmaculada Rodríguez-Piñero Fernández, Daciana Octavia Sârbu, Tibor Szanyi, Claudia Țapardel, Marc Tarabella, Elena Valenciano, Julie Ward, Flavio Zanonato, Damiano Zoffoli**  
on behalf of the S&D Group



**European Parliament resolution on Vietnam  
(2016/2755(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Vietnam,
  - having regard to the statement of 18 December 2015 by the Spokesperson of the European Union External Action Service on the arrest of lawyer Nguyen Van Dai,
  - having regard to the Statement of the EU Heads of State or Government of 7 March 2016,
  - having regard to press statement of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights: Rupert Colville on 13 May 2016 in Geneva on Turkey, Gambia and Vietnam;
  - having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Vietnam signed on 27 June 2012 and to the EU-Vietnam human rights dialogue held twice a year between the EU and the government of Vietnam,
  - having regard to the EU guidelines on Human Rights,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Vietnam acceded in 1982,
  - having regard to the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, to which Vietnam has been a state party to since 1982,
  - having regard to the United Nations Convention against Torture, ratified in 2015
  - having regard to the Universal Periodic Review Outcome on Vietnam by the UN Human Rights Council of 28 January 2014,
  - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Vietnam has been a one-party state since 1975, with the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV) allowing no challenge to its leadership and having control on the National Assembly and the Courts;
- B. whereas the Vietnamese authorities have cracked down heavily in response to a series of demonstrations taking place throughout the country in May 2016, organised following an ecological catastrophe that has decimated the nation's fish stocks;

C. whereas in December 2015 a Vietnamese lawyer and human rights activist, Lê Thu Hà, was arrested on 16 December, at the same time as a fellow prominent human rights

- D. lawyer Nguyễn Văn Đài, who was arrested for conducting propaganda against the state. ; whereas on 22 February 2016, human rights defender Mr Tran Minh Nhat was attacked by a police officer at his house in Lam Ha district, Lam Dong Province;
- E. whereas independent political parties, labour unions and human rights organisations are banned in Vietnam, with official approval needed for public gatherings; whereas some peaceful protests have been heavily policed, with high-profile activists kept under house arrest, while other demonstrations were broken up or outright prohibited from taking place; whereas the National Assembly is apparently working on a Law of Demonstrations and a Law of Associations, which might further restrict the little freedom civil society has, through revised registration and state supervision;
- F. whereas wide-ranging police measures to prevent and punish participation in demonstrations has resulted in a range of human rights violations including torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, as well as violations of the rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of movement; whereas conditions of detention and treatment of prisoners are harsh, with there being reports of at least seven deaths in custody with suspicions of possible police torture or other forms of ill-treatment in 2015;
- G. whereas despite accepting 182 of the 227 recommendations put forward by the United Nations Human Rights Council at its June 2014 periodic review, Vietnam rejected recommendations such as the release of political prisoners and people detained without charge or trial, legal reform to end political imprisonment, the creation of an independent national human rights institution, and other steps aimed at promoting public participation;
- H. whereas in May 2016, a BBC correspondent, Jonathan Head, was allegedly prohibited from covering President Obama's visit to Vietnam and stripped of accreditation, without being given an official reason; whereas Kim Quoc Hoa, the former editor-in-chief of the newspaper Nguoi Cao Tuoi, had his journalist licence revoked early 2015 and was later prosecuted under Article 258 for abusing democratic freedoms, after the newspaper exposed a number of corrupt officials;
- I. whereas Vietnam ranks 175 out of 180 in Reporters without Borders' 2016 World Press Freedom Index of 2016, with the print and media broadcast being controlled by the CPV, the military or other government organs; whereas the 2013 Decree 72 further restricts speech on blogs and social media, with the 2014 Decree 174 enforcing harsh penalties on social media and internet users who voice 'antistate propaganda' or 'reactionary ideologies';
- J. Whereas Vietnam ranking in the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index fell from 42nd in 2007 to 83rd in 2015, and the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) criticised Vietnamese authorities for failing to grasp the 'concept of substantive gender equality'; whereas domestic violence, trafficking of women and girls, prostitution, HIV/AIDS and violations of sexual and

- K. reproductive rights are huge problems in Vietnam; whereas the strong preference for sons has led to a highly skewed sex ration at birth, with their being 113 boys to every 100 girls in 2013;
- L. whereas 2015 marks the 25th anniversary of EU-Vietnam relations; whereas these relations have broadened rapidly from trade and aid to a more comprehensive relationship;
- M. whereas the Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation Agreement aims to establish a modern, broad-based and mutually beneficial partnership, based on shared interests and principles such as equality, mutual respect, the rule of law and human rights;
- N. whereas the EU is Vietnam's biggest export market; whereas the EU together with its Member States is the largest ODA provider to Vietnam and there will be an EU budget increase for this purpose of 30 % to EUR 400 million in 2014-2020;
1. Expresses strong concerns about the increasing levels of violence perpetrated against Vietnamese protesters expressing their anger over the mysterious mass deaths of fish along the country's central coast, calls upon the Government of Viet Nam to respect the right to freedom of assembly in line with its international human rights obligations
  2. Calls on Vietnam's government to immediately stop all harassment, intimidation, and persecution of environmental activists; insists that the government respect their right to peaceful protest and release anyone still wrongfully held;
  3. Condemns the conviction and harsh sentencing of journalists and bloggers in Vietnam, and calls for their release;
  4. Deplores the continuing violations of human rights, including political intimidation, harassment, assaults, arbitrary arrests, heavy prison sentences and unfair trials, in Vietnam perpetrated against political activists, journalists, bloggers, dissidents and human rights defenders, both on- and offline, in clear violation of Vietnam's international human rights obligations;
  5. Asks the EU to increase its political dialogue on human rights with Vietnam under the CPCA;
  6. Urges Vietnam to further strengthen cooperation with human rights mechanisms and improve compliance with treaty body reporting mechanisms; reiterates its calls for progress in the implementation of the UPR recommendations;
  7. Repeats its calls for the revision of specific articles in the Vietnamese penal code that are used to suppress freedom of expression; regrets that none of the 18,000 prisoners granted amnesty on 2 September 2015 included political prisoners; condemns detention and prison conditions and demands that the Vietnamese authorities guarantee unrestricted access to legal counsel;

8. Requests that Vietnam combat discrimination against women by introducing anti-trafficking legislation and by making effective steps toward curbing domestic violence and violations of reproductive rights;
9. Asks the EU Delegation to use all appropriate tools and instruments in order to accompany the Government of Vietnam in these steps and support and protect human rights defenders;
10. Acknowledges the efforts of the Vietnamese government in strengthening EU-ASEAN relations as well its support for EU Membership to the East Asia summit”;
11. Commends Vietnam’s achievement of a significant number of Millennium Development Goals and calls on the Commission and HRVP to ensure continued support for Vietnamese authorities as well as NGOs and CSOs in the country in the framework of the post-2015 Development Agenda”;
12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the VP/High Representative for CFSP, the governments of the Member States, the government and parliament of Vietnam, the government of ASEAN Member States, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.