



Plenary sitting

B8-0111/2018

6.2.2018

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 Executions in Egypt
(2018/2561(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

B8-0111/2018

**European Parliament resolution on Executions in Egypt
(2018/2561(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Egypt;
- having regard to its previous resolutions on abolition of the death penalty;
- having regard to the previous statements of the Vice President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the situation in Egypt;
- having regard to Council Conclusions of 6 February 2017 on the situation in Egypt;
- having regard to the Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt;
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;
- having regard to the African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples of 1981, ratified by Egypt on 20 March 1984;
- having regard to the European Union Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy;
- having regard to Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), and the second optional protocol therein;
- having regard to the United Nations Safeguards Guaranteeing Protection of the Rights of those facing the Death Penalty;
- having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights, and specifically to Articles 6 and 13;
- having regard to Article 2 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on the Death Penalty;
- having regard to United Nations General Assembly Resolutions on the death penalty, including that of 18 December 2014;
- having regard to the conclusions of the 7th EU-Egypt Association Council, held in Brussels on 25 July 2017;
- having regard to the EU-Egypt partnership priorities for 2017-2020;

- having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure;

A. whereas Egypt is an important partner for the European Union and its Member States in a wide range of areas including trade, security, and people to people contacts, and in the interests of stability in the Middle East and North Africa region;

B. whereas the European Union and its Member States have sought to support the Egyptian government and Egyptian people in implementing domestic economic, political, and social reforms since the fall of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011;

C. whereas the security situation in Egypt is fragile, with a high risk of terrorist attacks in the Sinai peninsula and major cities across the country by various Jihadi organisations;

D. whereas the human rights situation in Egypt has deteriorated over the past few years, with increasing restrictions placed on civil society, freedom of expression and the media, political freedoms, freedom of assembly, and concerns about police brutality, the use of mass trials, and detention without trial;

E. whereas Presidential elections are scheduled to take place in Egypt between 26 and 28 March 2018;

F. whereas abolition of the death penalty worldwide represents one of the main objectives of the European Union's human rights policy; whereas 105 countries around the world had abolished the death penalty for all crimes as of September 2017;

G. whereas there has been a dramatic rise in the number of death sentences in Egypt since President Sisi took power in 2014; whereas at least 1,857 individuals have been sentenced to death in Egypt since 1 January 2014, of which at least 846 of these sentences were handed down without the defendant appearing in court; whereas many sentences have subsequently been overturned and retrials ordered by the country's highest appellate court;

H. whereas the number of civilians sentenced to death in Egypt's military courts leapt from 60 in 2016 to at least 112 in 2017;

I. whereas at least 891 people are currently on trial or awaiting trial in Egypt on charges that could carry a death sentence; whereas at least two juveniles are currently on trial alongside adults, facing charges that could carry a death sentence;

J. whereas at least 34 individuals have been executed in Egypt since 1 January 2014;

K. whereas Egypt is a party to numerous international conventions on political and civil rights, torture, the rights of children and juveniles, and justice;

L. whereas the increase of death sentences in Egypt is closely linked to court rulings in response to terrorism-related offences; whereas courts have imposed mass sentences against scores of people in some cases;

M. whereas journalists, activists, and juveniles have been locked up for attending pro-democracy protests, with many facing charges which carry the death penalty;

N. whereas the imposition and execution of the death penalty against persons aged under 18 when the crime was committed is a violation of international law;

O. whereas in December 2017 the African Union called on the Egyptian Government to repeal the death sentence in 20 cases following claims of confessions obtained through torture and the denial of the right of access to lawyers;

1. Supports the Egyptian people and Egyptian government in addressing the country's economic, political and security challenges, and believes these aspirations must be met in full respect of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and international law;

2. Believes Egypt, European Union Member States, and third countries have a shared interest in defeating the threat to regional and international security; further offers to help the Egyptian authorities develop robust intelligence and security mechanisms, in line with international law, including measures relating to crowd control and legitimate, peaceful protest;

3. Supports the aspirations of the majority of Egyptian people who want to establish a free, stable, prosperous, inclusive, and democratic country which respects its national and international commitments on human rights and fundamental freedoms;

4. Believes that as a major actor in the Middle East and North Africa, Egypt's aspirations to transition to a democratic state has the potential to be the role model for many other states in the region;

5. Notes that the Egyptian authorities insist strict procedures are in place within the country's legal system in cases where the death penalty is applicable;

6. Deplores the significant rise in the number of people sentenced to death in Egypt since 2014, and the use of mass trials during which many such sentences are handed down;

7. Calls on the Egyptian authorities to abide by their international commitments regarding civil and political rights, torture, and the detention of juveniles;

8. Supports efforts to ensure minimum European Union and other international standards are met in those countries, including Egypt, which retain the death penalty;

9. Encourages bilateral and multi-lateral initiatives between Member States, the European Union, United Nations, third countries including Egypt, and other regional organisations on issues relating to the death penalty;

10. Supports global efforts to restrict the application of the death penalty in those countries which retain capital punishment, and thereby reduce the number of executions;

11. Demands that those defendants facing trial for crimes which carry the death penalty in Egypt are afforded full access to legal representation and a fair trial in accordance with accepted international standards;

12. Condemns the use of the death sentence to suppress opposition, or on the grounds of religious belief, homosexuality, adultery, and for other issues which would either be considered trivial or not crimes at all;

13. Recognises the growing international momentum towards abolition of the death penalty; further notes that over the last 20 years there has been a significant increase in the number of countries abolishing the death penalty, or imposing a moratorium on its use;

14. Notes that while the death penalty is not outlawed under international law, there is considerable international pressure for its abolition;

15. Notes that Egypt has not ratified the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights relating to abolition of the death penalty, or the UN International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;

16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the EEAS, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the President, Government, and Parliament of the Arab Republic of Egypt, the African Union, and the Arab League.