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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0164/2018**

13.3.2018

## **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 the arrest of human rights defenders in Sudan, notably the case of Sakharov Prize laureate Salih Mahmoud Osman  
(2018/2631(RSP))

**Elena Valenciano, Victor Boștinăru, Josef Weidenholzer, Ana Gomes**  
on behalf of the S&D Group

**B8-0164/2018**

**European Parliament resolution on the arrest of human rights defenders in Sudan, notably the case of Sakharov Prize laureate Salih Mahmoud Osman (2018/2631(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Sudan,
  - having regard to its statement on the release Sakharov Laureate Salih, 11/02/20,
  - having regard to the local statement by the Heads of Mission of EU Embassies on the recent protests in Khartoum, 11th January 2018,
  - having regard to the UN the Security Council resolution 2400 (2018) adopted at its 8177th meeting, on 8 February 2018,
  - having regard to the statement by the President of the UN Security Council in connection with the Council’s consideration of the item entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan” 31 January 2018,
  - having regard to the statement by the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan on the abduction of aid worker in Darfur Khartoum, 9 October 2017,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
  - having regard to article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both of which provide that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,
  - having regard to the statement of 27 June 2016 by the Spokesperson of the HR/VP on Sudanese Government’s announcement of a four-month unilateral cessation of hostilities,
  - having regard to the revised Cotonou Partnership Agreement,
  - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights, of June 1981,
  - having regard to Article 123 of its Rules of Procedure
- A. whereas the situation in Sudan continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region; whereas Sudanese authorities have carried out a crackdown on peaceful protest, civil society and human rights defenders;

- B. whereas in connection with sporadic protests around Sudan over the rise in the cost of food and medicines at least 140 opposition party members, human rights defenders, students and women rights activists have been arrested and detained by the Sudanese National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS);
- C. whereas the crackdown comes in the context of protests that began on 7 January 2018 against the rise in the cost of food in Sudan which began after the government made a decision to cut subsidies; whereas protests have been met with excessive use of force by Sudanese forces, leading to the death of one protester and several others injured, as well as nationwide crackdown on journalists and activists;
- D. whereas Sudanese NISS forces arrested Salih Mahmoud Osman, Vice President of the Darfur Bar Association, member of the Democratic Lawyers Association, a human rights lawyer who has promoted the establishment of the rule of law and advocated for legal reform through the National Assembly of Sudan and recipient of the 2007 Sakharov Prize at his law firm on 1 February 2018;
- E. whereas human rights defenders and civil society organisations, including lawyers and bar associations, play a central role in ensuring democracy, human rights, the rule of law, stability and sustainable development;
- F. whereas several of the human rights defenders that have been detained have been subject to torture and ill-treatment;
- G. whereas, the ongoing violence by government forces, pro-government militia groups and anti-government armed group forms the backdrop to continued harassment, arbitrary arrests, incommunicado detentions and alleged torture of human rights defenders (HRDs) by Sudanese military and security forces;
- H. whereas this arrests include political opponents, three SCP leaders were arbitrarily arrested and detained, including Mohamed Mukhtar al Khatib, the political secretary of the Sudanese Communist Party; Mohamed Abdalla Aldoma, the deputy chairperson of the National Umma Party; Mohamed Farouk Salman, a leading member of Sudan National Alliance – Forces; and two members of the Sudanese Communist Party central committee Mohieldeen Eljalad and Sidgi Kabbalo;
- I. whereas Sudanese forces also arrested Rawa Gafar Bakhit, a human rights defender and advocate of displaced persons on 17 January 2018 in Omdurman; whereas Hanan Hassan Khalifa was January 2018, arrested while traveling to meet detainees who she was legally representing in Kobar Prison, North Khartoum;
- J. whereas Human rights defender Mohamed Aldouma, President of the Darfur Bar Association, was arrested during a demonstration in Omdurman on 17 January 2018

and was transferred to Khartoum North Common Prison, commonly known as Kober, and was then released on 19 February, following ill-treatment while in detention;

- K. whereas Sudanese authorities prevented Mohammed Aldouma from travelling and seized his passport while he was en route to Cairo for medical treatment on 8 March 2018, following ill-treatment while in detention;
1. Expresses concern about the ongoing persecution of human rights defenders and civil society in Sudan;
  2. Calls for an immediate and unconditional release of Salih Mahmoud Osman, , as well as any other human rights defenders and civil society activists who are being held solely as a result of their legitimate and peaceful work in the defence of human rights;
  3. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the practice of torture and ill-treatment towards any detained persons, including human rights defenders; Insists that all detainees' conditions comply with international standards, including the United Nations' Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment;
  4. Calls on Sudanese authorities to investigate all allegations of torture and ill-treatment, and bring perpetrators to justice; Emphasises that any purported information collected as a result of torture and ill-treatment must never be admissible as evidence in legal proceedings;
  5. Deplores targeting all human rights defenders and activists in Sudan and calls on the authorities to guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions including judicial harassment;
  6. Notes the release of human rights defenders Amal Habani, Rawa Gafar Bakhit, Hanan Hassan Khalifa, Mohamed Aldouma, Nahid Jabrallah who had previously been detained;
  7. Reiterates that Sudanese authorities must cease targeting all human rights defenders and activists and guarantee in all circumstances that they are able to carry out their legitimate human rights activities without fear of reprisals and free of all restrictions and harassment;
  8. Calls on the External Action Service to continue to improve its implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, fully utilising all means at its disposal, such as full use of emergency funds available at the level of EU delegations; Emphasises that EU delegations must prioritise support for those human rights defenders most at risk in their EIDHR local calls for proposals, resulting in effective and targeted support;

9. Requests the EEAS and EU delegations to report back to the Parliament on actions taken to provide protection and support to human rights defenders;
10. Calls for united EU and Member State action in support of human rights defenders at risk;
11. Underlines its continued commitment to the protection mechanism for human rights defenders at risk;
12. Reiterates that the review and reform of key laws including the 2010 National Security Act, and those regulating media and civil society; bring them in line with international standards upholding freedoms of expression, assembly and association is imperative,
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Government of Sudan, the African Union, the United Nations Secretary-General, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP).