



Plenary sitting

B9-0089/2019

17.9.2019

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 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on Iran, notably the situation of women's rights defenders and imprisoned EU dual nationals
(2019/2823(RSP))

Anna Fotyga, Karol Karski, Raffaele Fitto, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Ruža Tomašić, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Valdemar Tomaševski, Veronika Vrecionová, Assita Kanko, Anthea McIntyre, Charlie Weimers, Jan Zahradil, Alexandr Vondra
on behalf of the ECR Group

European Parliament resolution on Iran, notably the situation of women's rights defenders and imprisoned EU dual nationals (2019/2823(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, to which Iran is a party,
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders,
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on the death penalty, the EU Guidelines on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the EU Human Rights Guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline,
 - having regard to the Council decision of 12 April 2018 to extend its restrictive measures for a further 12 months in response to serious human rights violations in Iran,
 - having regard to the statement of 29 November 2018 by UN human rights experts, entitled ‘Iran must protect women’s rights advocates’,
 - having regard to the UN General Assembly resolution of 17 December 2018 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,
 - having regard to the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran of 30 January 2019,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on Iran of 4 February 2019,
 - having regard to the statement by the Spokesperson for the European External Action Service (EEAS) of 12 March 2019 on the conviction of Iranian human rights lawyer Nasrin Sotoudeh,
 - having regard to the Iranian President’s Charter on Citizens’ Rights,
 - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas its resolution of 25 October 2016 on the EU strategy towards Iran stresses the importance of upholding the EU human rights guidelines, including on human rights defenders, in the context of EU-Iran relations;
- B. whereas human rights defenders, journalists, lawyers and online activists in Iran continue to face harassment, arbitrary arrest, detention and prosecution for their work; whereas the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and other forces have unleashed a severe clampdown on civil society in the past months;

- C. whereas the Iranian government since January 2019 has employed severe punitive measures, including approximately 185 executions, all of which were determined with minimal legal basis;
- D. whereas 208 cases of inhumane and degrading conditions in prisons and lack of adequate access to medical care during detention in Iran have been reported, notably in Evin prison, in contravention of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners;
- E. whereas Iranian courts regularly fail to provide fair trials, and use confessions obtained under torture as evidence in court;
- F. whereas the Iranian judiciary in 2018 clamped down on peaceful acts of resistance by women's rights defenders protesting against the compulsory wearing of the hijab; whereas in 2018 at least 39 women were arrested in connection with the protests and another 55 were held for their work on women's rights;
- G. whereas on August 27, the court of first instance sentenced three women labor rights activists, Sepideh Gholian, Sanaz Allahyari and Asal Mohammadi on charges that include "assembly and collusion to act against national security";
- H. whereas many female human rights defenders were sentenced to lengthy prison sentences for so-called 'enmity against God', "propaganda against the state," and "disrupting public order";
- I. whereas Saba Kordafshari, Mojgan Keshavarz, Yasman Ariani, Monireh Arabshah, four women who peacefully protested compulsory hijab laws in Iran, have been sentenced to prison sentences ranging from 15 to 24 years;
- J. whereas Sahar Khodayari, an Iranian woman, was caught dressed as a man to watch a football game and was detained; according to Iranian law, women are not permitted to watch sports in the presence of men; learning that she would face a six month prison sentence for her actions, she burned herself to death in protest;
- K. whereas at least 30 dual nationals - including citizens of EU Member States - are said to have been arrested in Iran in the last four years, mostly on spying charges.
- L. whereas Iran does not recognise dual citizenship, thereby limiting the access foreign embassies have to their dual citizens held there;
- M. whereas the continuing practice of arrests of EU-Iranian dual nationals, including British-Iranian Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe and Swedish-Iranian Ahmadreza Djalali, is followed by prolonged solitary confinement and interrogations, lack of due process, and long prison sentences based on vague or unspecified 'national security' and 'espionage' charges;
- N. whereas Mrs Zaghari-Ratcliffe is currently serving a five year jail term having been accused of seeking a "soft overthrow" of the Islamic Republic;
- O. whereas on 15 April 2018 British Iranian academic and anti-war activist Abbas Edalat was arrested by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, with local media reporting that he belongs to "a network" of British spies;
- P. whereas the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom stated in the case of imprisoned dual nationals, particularly concerning Anousheh Ashouri, that

“treatment of all dual nationals detained in Iran is a priority and we raise their cases at the most senior levels. We urge Iran to let them be reunited with their families”;

1. Demands Iran guarantee the safety and wellbeing of human rights activists in custody and to pursue full investigations into reports of torture;
2. Calls on Iran to immediately and unconditionally release all human rights defenders, prisoners of conscience and journalists detained and sentenced merely for exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly; stresses that the Iranian authorities must in all circumstances ensure that human rights defenders, lawyers and journalists are able to carry out their work free from threats, intimidation and impediment;
3. Reiterates that if the Iranian government seeks to strengthen its relationship with the EU, then it should abide by the appropriate standards of behaviour, respect the rights of EU nationals and uphold human rights;
4. Believes numerous EU-Iranian nationals have been arbitrarily deprived of their liberty and that their right to a fair trial before an independent and impartial court has been violated, representing a flagrant violation of Iran’s obligations under international law;
5. Urges Iran to permit full consular access, access to legal representation, and appropriate medical treatment for all those being held; Is deeply concerned about the arrest, detention, and conviction of EU-Iranian dual nationals,
6. Urges Iran to stop criminalizing the work of women’s rights defenders, including those peacefully protesting against the compulsory wearing of the hijab, and calls for this discriminatory and humiliating practice to be abolished;
7. Urges Iran to amend Article 48 of the country’s Criminal Procedure Law to ensure that all defendants have the right to be represented by a lawyer of their choice and to a fair trial in line with Iran’s commitments to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
8. Calls on Iran to cooperate with the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, including by allowing him to enter the country;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service, 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, the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Members of the Iranian Majlis.