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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0144/2019**

22.10.2019

## **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 Egypt  
(2019/2880(RSP))

**Michael Gahler, Tomáš Zdechovský, Eva Maydell, Loránt Vincze, Vladimír Bilčík, Željana Zovko, Karlo Ressler, Romana Tomc, Tomasz Frankowski, Luděk Niedermayer, Magdalena Adamowicz, Isabel Wiseler-Lima, Milan Zver, Andrius Kubilius, David Lega, Arba Kokalari, Roberta Metsola, Sandra Kalniete, Inese Vaidere, Antonio López-Istúriz White**

on behalf of the PPE Group

**B9-0144/2019**

**European Parliament resolution on Egypt  
(2019/2880(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Egypt, in particular that of 13 December 2018 on the situation of human rights defenders, that of 8 February 2018 on executions in Egypt, that of 10 March 2016 on Egypt, notably the case of Giulio Regeni, that of 17 December 2015 on Ibrahim Halawa, potentially facing the death penalty, and that of 15 January 2015 on the situation in Egypt,
  - having regard to the Egyptian Constitution,
  - having regard to the 19 September EU Item 4 Statement at the UN Human Rights Council mentioning Egypt,
  - having regard to the 27 September statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet,
  - having regard the OHCHR statement on 25 February 2019 by UN experts condemning executions of nine men after “confessions under torture”
  - having regard to the 3 October Press Release by the Egyptian National Council on Human Rights entitled “checking citizens’ phones breaches the law and the Constitution”,
  - having regard to the new EU Strategic Framework and Action Plan on Human Rights, which aims to place the protection and surveillance of human rights at the heart of all EU policies,
  - having regard the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) ratified by Egypt;
  - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas since 20 September a number of peaceful protest have emerged; whereas the government has responded to these protests by an increased level of repression and has arbitrarily arrested according to civil society reports up to 3,000 protestors including, opposition politicians, journalists, and civil society activist, even if they have not participated in the protests;
- B. whereas the recent actions by Egyptian security forces have in particular been focused on journalists and have led to the imprisonment of among others Alaa Abdel Fattah and Esraa Abdelfattah;

- C. whereas reports circulate about serious human rights violations committed by the Egyptian security forces, such as among others torture and inhuman treatment of those detained;
- D. whereas the recent actions by the Egyptian authorities undermine the fundamental freedoms of expression, association and assembly, which are all enshrined in the Egyptian Constitution as well as international human rights law;
- E. whereas plainclothes security forces are increasingly targeting citizens by randomly checking their mobile telephones in search of messages or videos related to anti-government criticism;
- F. whereas the EU on 19 September issued an “Item 4” statement at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva recalling “the importance of the respect of online and offline freedom of expression, media, peaceful assembly and association and the need to stop unduly restricting space for civil society, including through assets freezes, travel bans, long periods of pre-trial detention and a growing number of arrests especially since June.”;
- G. whereas the Egyptian National Council on Human Rights (NCHR) on 3 October in a statement highlighted the “arbitrary security measures that some citizens experienced” linked to the “unjustified expansion in stopping citizens in roads and squares without legal warrants” and underlined that “stopping citizens as they are walking in streets and forcing them to show policemen their mobile phones to be checked [is] in violation to many constitutional provisions that provide for protecting private lives and protecting citizens’ correspondences and communications, including electronic communications and means of communication”;
- H. whereas UNHCR have declared that there are several cases pending in the courts of individuals convicted, on the basis of evidence allegedly obtained under torture and facing the death penalty, whereas, these convictions appear to be in direct disregard of both Egyptian and international law and procedure;
- I. whereas the Speaker of the Parliament, Ali Abdel Aal, in a recent statement on 1 October suggested allowing more freedoms for dissidents and critics, stating that the “next period will witness political, party and media reforms”;
- J. whereas on 27 September the Human Rights Commissioner Michelle Bachelet urged Egyptian authorities to respect the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, “in full compliance with international norms and standards”;
- K. whereas the EU recognizes Egypt's key role for regional security and stability, managing migration and efforts to counter terrorism and recalls the need to tackle it in full respect of international human rights law;
- L. whereas Egypt is faced with a difficult security environment, and has been the persistent target of violent terrorist attacks, which have taken the lives of numerous innocent victims;

- M. whereas Egypt has gone through several difficult political challenges since the 2011 revolution and continues to be in need of support and assistance from the international community to address its economic, political and security challenges;
- N. whereas Egypt is a key country on the African continent and hence EU-Egypt relations are of particular relevance regarding the EU's approach regarding the Middle East, the Mediterranean as well as the African continent as a whole;
- O. whereas key pillars of the EU-Egypt partnership priorities are human rights and the rule of law;
1. Notes with deep concern the reports about the high number of arrests of protestors, civil society representatives, opposition politicians, human rights activists political activities and journalists;
  2. Calls on the Egyptian government to fully comply with the provisions of its own Constitution, and to provide each detainee full due process of law, including the right to a fair trial and adequate legal protection;
  3. Calls upon the Egyptian government to fully respect its international commitments, in particular when it comes to the provision to respect the freedom of the media and association;
  4. Recalls the importance of the respect of online and offline freedom of expression, media, peaceful assembly and association and the need to stop unduly restricting space for civil society, including through assets freezes, travel bans, long periods of pre-trial detention and a growing number of arrests especially since June 2019;
  5. Underlines, that the respect of Human Rights is the only way to ensure the long-term stability and security of Egypt;
  6. Highlights the statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the press release by the Egyptian National Council on Human Rights, and calls on the Egyptian authorities to hence follow-suit and immediately address the identified shortcomings;
  7. Reiterates its call on the Egyptian authorities to shed light on any alleged case of enforced disappearances without further delay and on the circumstances of the death of Giulio Regeni and Eric Lang and hold those responsible to account, fully cooperating with the authorities of the concerned Member States on these cases;
  8. Urges the Egyptian authorities to decree a moratorium on executions with a view to abolishing the use of the death penalty in Egypt and reiterates its call on Egypt to sign and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aimed at the abolition of the death penalty;
  9. Calls on the government as well as the parliament of Egypt to follow suit on the promises by Speaker Ali Abdelaal on 1 October to provide wider political, party and media freedoms;

10. Recognises the regional security challenges of Egypt and commits to continue the bilateral and regional EU-Egypt dialogue in overcoming joint challenges;
11. Stands in solidarity with the Egyptian people who suffer from terrorist attacks, send its most sincerest condolences to the victims of terrorism and reaffirms its commitment in fighting the spread of radical ideologies and terrorist groups;
12. Instructs its President to forward this Resolution to the Commission, the Council, and the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Government and the Parliament of Egypt.