



Plenary sitting

B9-0199/2019

26.11.2019

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 the situation of freedoms in Algeria
(2019/2927(RSP))

on behalf of the Renew Group

B9-0199/2019

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of freedoms in Algeria
(2019/2927(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Algeria and in particular its resolution of 30 April 2015 on the imprisonment of workers and human rights activists;
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief;
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights;
 - having regard to Article 48 of the Constitution of Algeria, wherein the freedom of association is guaranteed to the citizen;
 - having regard to Article 42 of the Constitution of Algeria, wherein the right to freedom of religion or belief is protected;
 - having regard to Article 54 of the Constitution of Algeria, wherein the right to create associations is guaranteed;
 - 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 regards to the EU Algeria Association Council on 13 March 2017 which has adopted the "Partnership Priorities" focusing on the implementation of the Constitution revision and the EU's support to the progress of democracy and human rights in Algeria;
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on the Death Penalty, on Torture, on Freedom of Expression and on Human Rights Defenders;
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
 - having regard to Rules 144(5) and 132(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Algeria is a close neighbour and a key partner of the European Union and of the region;
- B. whereas the demonstrations against former President Abdelaziz Bouteflika started in February 2019, when he announced his candidacy for a fifth consecutive term; whereas

the protests have maintained its momentum with large demonstrations every Friday calling for a more pluralistic and inclusive framework to prepare for free elections;

- C. Whereas in March 2019 former President Abdelaziz Bouteflika announced that he would not seek a new term and resigned in April 2019;
 - D. Whereas the authorities initially tolerated the protests, but started arresting groups of protesters from the beginning of June 2019 onwards in spite of the peaceful nature of the protests;
 - E. Whereas an indefinite blanket ban on demonstrations in Algiers in place since 2001 has been enforced ; whereas the protection guaranteed to Algerian people by the Constitution is being misused by the use of articles taken from the penal code criminalizing “offending the president,” “insulting state officials,” and “denigrating Islam”;
 - F. Whereas large amounts of pro-democracy movement activists have been arrested since September 2019; whereas many of the arrestees remain detained on charges as “harming national unity” and “undermining the morale of the army”;
 - G. Whereas prominent figures of the demonstration movement (Hirak) have been prosecuted; whereas the leaders of the Hirak are charged with threatening state security, national unity, territorial integrity, calling for an illegal gathering and undermining the army moral; whereas at least 13 of these leaders are in pre-trial detention while others are free pending trial;
 - H. Whereas opposition party leaders, human rights defenders, journalists, political activists and religious minorities are being targeted by the authorities and face harassment, oppression and arrest;
 - I. Whereas the National Magistrates Syndicate in Algeria started a nationwide indefinite strike on Sunday, October 27, to demand an independent and impartial judicial system and to denounce the decision of the Supreme Judiciary Council to reshuffle almost 3000 judges;
1. Calls on the Algerian authorities to fulfil their national and international obligations and to immediately and unconditionally release all peaceful activists, human rights defenders, journalists and civil society organisers; Insists that all charges against these citizens are dropped immediately;
 2. Stresses the importance of EU Algeria relations, with Algeria as a key neighbour and partner and is committed to continuing to support this country in the process of building democratic institutions, respecting and defending human rights, the rule of law and freedom of expression
 3. Is convinced that democratic reforms and a constructive, serene dialogue aimed at ensuring political, economic and social stability in Algeria, but also at offering hope to Algerian youth frustrated and worried about their future, is the way forward;

4. Calls for an end to the crisis based on a peaceful and inclusive political process. Is convinced that these democratic reforms and this constructive dialogue ensuring stability in Algeria could serve the relaunch of a wealthy Arab-Maghreb Union necessary for the cooperation between both sides of the Mediterranean
5. Insists that the citizens of Algeria should have the right and possibility to express their opinion and discontent; Insists on the respect of those fundamental rights including the freedom of association, assembly and speech; expresses its concern at limiting the freedom of expression by shutting social media accounts and websites;
6. Calls for free and fair elections to take place in line with the wishes of the Algerian people;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the parliaments and governments of the Member States and the Algerian government