



Plenary sitting

B9-0327/2020

6.10.2020

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 Ethiopian migrants in detention centres in Saudi Arabia (2020/2815(RSP))

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on behalf of the Renew Group

B9-0327/2020

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of Ethiopian migrants in detention centres in Saudi Arabia
(2020/2815(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular those of 11 March 2014 on Saudi Arabia, its relations with the EU and its role in the Middle East and North Africa, of 12 February 2015 on the case of Mr Raif Badawi, Saudi Arabia, of 8 October 2015 on the case of Ali Mohammed al-Nimr, of 31 May 2018 on the situation of women's rights defenders in Saudi Arabia, of 25 October 2018 on the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, and of 14 February 2019 on women's rights defenders in Saudi Arabia,
 - having regard to the statement of the International Organisation for Migration of 15 September 2020 on the "urgent action needed to address conditions in detention in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia",
 - having regard to the statement of October 1 2020 of the UN Committee on Migrant Workers,
 - having regard to the investigations by Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Sunday Telegraph on the conditions of Ethiopian migrants detained in Saudi Arabia,
 - having regard to the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, known as the "Nelson Mandela Rules",
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Child of November 1989,
 - having regard to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration adopted by the UN General Assembly on 19th December 2018,
 - having regard to the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees,
 - having regard to the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers,
 - having regard to rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas over 30,000 Ethiopian migrants clandestinely crossed the Gulf of Aden this spring according to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM); Whereas in April 2020 Huthi rebels decided to clear the Ethiopian migrants' camp at Al Ghar near the Saudi border, using mortars and live fire on harmless civilians, including pregnant women, killing many; Whereas survivors were then met with live fire from Saudi border guards, killing numerous other migrants;

- B. whereas Saudi border guards arrested and detained the remaining thousands of Ethiopian migrants in about 10 highly overcrowded detention centers, most notably the Shmeisi Detention Center in between the cities of Jeddah and Mecca, allegedly hosting 16,000 Ethiopian detainees according to Ethiopian consular authorities, as well as the Jizan Central Prison and the Al Dayer camp; Whereas the total number of migrants detained since April 2020 in such conditions is believed to be nearing 30,000;
- C. whereas photos and videos of thousands of emaciated bodies from the detention centers were leaked to the Sunday Telegraph in August 2020; whereas they revealed thousands of detained Ethiopians in manifestly dire conditions, suffering from malnutrition; Whereas they have almost no access to potable water, very limited food and no access to medical care, including prenatal care for pregnant women; whereas there are no functioning toilets or lavatories in rooms detaining in some instances 400 individuals in 150 squared meters; whereas individuals suffering from tuberculosis or alleged Covid-19 are not isolated from others; Whereas migrants are often charged and convicted of crimes without any access to legal counsel;
- D. whereas, since the press leaks, no effective investigation on the part of Saudi authorities have taken place, despite Saudi authorities claiming they would investigate the matter in their letter to the Sunday Telegraph in early September 2020; Whereas detention conditions have worsened, as detainees have since been beaten and stripped of their mobile phones;
- E. whereas only 121 women have been repatriated since April, at their own expense, in cooperation with Ethiopian authorities; Whereas many Ethiopian migrants are stripped of their shoes, belts and phones by Saudi authorities before boarding to Ethiopia;
1. Deplores the heinous detention conditions of thousands of Ethiopian migrants, women, children and men detained in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;
 2. Urges the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to immediately release them, transfer them to centers that respect international standards and improve conditions in line with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners; Urges Saudi authorities to immediately release children and to identify and provide appropriated support to pregnant women, and urgently seek alternatives to their detention;
 3. Calls upon Saudi Arabia to effectively investigate the allegations of abuse and prosecute those responsible in accordance with international standards; Reminds Saudi Arabia that it should protect all migrants on its soil, especially from human traffickers, and ensure no collusion between criminal organisations and its own border guards; and that it should provide migrants with the basic right to challenge their detentions and deportations, including full access to the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) if they choose to seek refugee status;
 4. Calls upon Saudi and Ethiopian authorities to engage on a dialogue, together with the International Organization for Migration and the UNHCR, to urgently facilitate the voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Ethiopian nationals and to their rights to safely return to their home and to fully assist them in the process;
 5. Calls upon the EU delegation and the diplomatic missions of EU Member States in

Saudi Arabia to urgently request to visit the migrants' detention centres; Insists that the promotion of human rights must be at the core of EU's external policy; Calls on the EU and EU Member States to include a human rights approach in its relations with Saudi Arabia;

6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, 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 Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the Pan-African Parliament, the Secretary General of the United Nations, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Council, the Director General of the International Organisation for Migration, H.M. King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud and Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman Al Saud, and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.