



Plenary sitting

B9-0190/2021

9.3.2021

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 human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in particular the cases of death row inmates and human rights defenders
(2021/2578(RSP))

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on behalf of The Left Group

B9-0190/2021

European Parliament resolution on the human rights situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in particular the cases of death row inmates and human rights defenders (2021/2578(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Bahrain,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders of 1998,
 - having regard to the Statement by OHCHR, on the decision of Bahrain's Court of Cassation to uphold the death sentence against two men, of 14 July 2020,
 - having regard to the Arab Charter on Human Rights, ratified by Bahrain in 2013, notably its Article 32(1) which guarantees the right to information and freedom of opinion and expression, and Article 8 which prohibits physical or psychological torture and cruel, degrading, humiliating and inhuman treatment,
 - having regard to the Statement by High Representative Josep Borrell on the confirmation of the death sentence for two citizens, of 9 January 2020,
 - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas since the crackdown on mobilizations in 2011 and the invasion of the country by Saudi Arabia, human rights violations have increased even more in the country; whereas the ruling monarchical elite opposes any social and democratic transformation of the country and uses the religious question to repress any opposition to the regime (especially under the pretext of the "anti-terrorist" fight);
- B. whereas authorities have arrested, prosecuted, tortured and harassed human rights defenders, journalists, opposition leaders, trade unionists and lawyers; whereas some of them have been tried before a military tribunal, "the National Safety Court," and were handed lengthy prison terms; whereas hundreds have been arbitrarily stripped of citizenship, while activists and journalists who continue their work from exile risk reprisals against family members who remain in the country; whereas the most important critical civil-society voices, the one independent newspaper, and the major Shi'a and secular political opposition associations, have been outlawed by the government;
- C. whereas in 2017, Bahrain abandoned a de facto moratorium on the death penalty and has since then, conducted six executions, five of which were condemned as arbitrary by UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions; whereas there are 27 individuals currently on death row, of whom 25 are at imminent risk of execution; whereas nearly half of whom were convicted on the basis of confessions allegedly extracted under

torture;

- D. whereas on July 13, 2020, the Court of Cassation upheld the death sentences on Mohamed Ramadan and Hussein Ali Moosa, despite unfair trials and credible evidence that their convictions were based on confessions coerced under torture; whereas they run the risk of being executed at any time; whereas three UN human rights experts warned on 12 February 2020 that carrying out these death sentences would constitute an arbitrary killing;
- E. whereas thousands of people were arbitrary detained during the crackdown of the protests in 2011; whereas 10 years after that, eleven prominent civil-society figures are still imprisoned; whereas these include Abduljalil AlSingace, Abdulhadi AlKhawaja, Hasan Mushaima, Mohamed Hasan Jawad, Mohamed Ali Ismaeel, sheikh AbdulWahab Husain, sheikh Mohamed Habib al-Muqdad, sheikh AbdulJalil al-Muqdad, sheikh Saeed Merza al-Noori, sheikh AbdulHadi al-Mukhuder and sheikh Merza al-Mahroos;
- F. whereas the recurrent violations of freedom of expression, assembly and demonstration in the country; whereas the restrictions on Internet access, the increase in censorship, and the closure of social networks and media, have continued to increase since 2011 and new laws have further closed the space for political participation; whereas several public figures have been prosecuted solely for their posts on social media, including prominent lawyers Abdullah Al Shamlawi and Abdullah Hashim; whereas six journalists are currently imprisoned;
- G. whereas authorities have also outlawed all political opposition parties; whereas Sheikh Ali Salman, the head of al-Wefaq (the largest parliamentary group now outlawed), was sentenced to life in prison;
- H. whereas Bahrain's prisons remain overcrowded and unsanitary; whereas in March the authorities released 1,486 prisoners due to the health risk posed by Covid-19, however they have excluded opposition leaders, activists, journalists, and human rights defenders; whereas authorities continue to deny Bahraini prisoners adequate medical care, endangering the health of the imprisoned persons with chronic medical conditions, such as Hassan Mushaima and Abdel Jalil al-Singace as well as human rights activists Ali AlHajee and Naji Fateel;
- I. whereas credible allegations of torture of prisoners and detainees continue to be raised but are not seriously investigated;
- J. whereas women and LGBTIQ people continue facing gender-based violence and discrimination; whereas the penal code exempts perpetrators of rape from prosecution and punishment if they marry their victims and reduces the penalties for perpetrators of so-called honour crimes; whereas it criminalizes adultery and sexual relations outside marriage, and although no law explicitly criminalizes same-sex relations, authorities have used vague penal code provisions against "indecent" and "immoral" to target sexual and gender minorities; whereas there is no law that prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender identity or sexual orientation;
- K. whereas Bahrain continues to be a place where migrant workers, especially women hired as domestic servants, are heavily exploited; whereas migrant workers are under

constant threat of expulsion and are victims of numerous abuses of labour rights;

- L. whereas Bahrain continued to participate in Yemen military operations as part of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition, which is responsible for potential war crimes;
 - M. whereas despite recurring violence by the Bahraini authorities, some EU Member States, as well as United Kingdom and United States, continue to sign arms contracts and military cooperation agreements with the country;
 - N. whereas Bahrain's geopolitical importance being located between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and hosting the US Navy Fifth Fleet and a base for the United Kingdom;
1. Condemns the recurrent repression of human rights defenders, political opponents, trade unionists, journalists, community activists and representatives of social movements in the country;
 2. Strongly condemns the death sentences of Mohammed Ramadan and Husain Ali Moosa; calls for an independent review of their cases as well as the other cases involving those facing death penalty; urges to commute their death sentences and all outstanding death sentences;
 3. Reaffirms its opposition to the death penalty in all cases and in all circumstances and underlines once again that the abolition of the death penalty contributes to enhancing human dignity; calls for the moratorium on the death penalty to be reintroduced as a first step towards its abolition;
 4. Urges the unconditional and immediate release of all those imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, including Abduljalil AlSingace Hasan Mushaima, the Danish-Bahraini citizen Abdulhadi AlKhawaja and the Swedish-Bahraini citizen Sheikh AlMuqdad;
 5. Urges Bahrain to rescind its arbitrary bans on opposition parties, civil society groups and independent media and encourage the development of civic space in Bahrain;
 6. Stresses that the fight against terrorism must in no way, serve as a pretext to restrict individual freedoms and fundamental rights or to repress political opponents; condemns, therefore, the policy carried out by the Bahraini authorities which, under this pretext, seeks to reinforce the repression and stigmatize a part of the population based on their origin, culture or religion; asks the authorities to promptly amend its Act No. 58 (2006) on protecting society from acts of terrorism and all other laws that limit freedom of expression and political freedoms and which are not fully conform to international obligations and standards;
 7. Demands Bahrain to end the use of torture and other -ill-treatment and to tackle the culture of impunity by holding suspected perpetrators accountable and ensuring effective mechanisms for victims to receive justice and restitution;
 8. Urges the authorities to adopt the full and effective implementation of all the recommendations in the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry report;

9. Calls on the authorities to combat all forms of violence against women and to repeal articles 353 and 334 of the Penal Code which condone violence against women, and to repeal provisions that criminalize consensual adult sexual relations; urges to amend laws as necessary to remove discrimination against women and LGBTBIQ people, and to allow women to pass nationality to their children on an equal basis with men;
10. Urges the Bahraini authorities to reinstate the citizenship of the 300 individuals who remain stripped of their Bahraini nationality, and to refrain from further using citizenship revocations as a punitive measure;
11. Expresses its alarm at the violations of labour rights and the repression of social and trade union movements in the country; urges the Bahraini authorities to amend the labour law to ensure that domestic workers are able to benefit from the same rights as other workers and to comply with the ILO conventions;
12. Denounces that working conditions and the repression of social movements are especially alarming in the construction and textile sectors; keeping in mind that several European companies have subsidiaries and subcontractors in the country, reminds that the activities of European companies operating in third countries must fully respect international human rights standards; calls on the EU and the Member States to take appropriate action against European companies that do not comply with respect for human rights and the social, health and environmental standards or that do not adequately compensate the victims of human rights violations for which they are directly or indirectly responsible;
13. Strongly denounces the arms and military cooperation agreements signed by some Member States, United Kingdom and United States and countries in the region; Calls for the export of tear gas and riot gear to be banned until its misuse has been investigated and those responsible have been identified and brought to justice; calls for a European arms embargo against Bahrain, particularly in view of the internal repression and the seriousness of war crimes and violations of humanitarian law committed by the Coalition, of which Bahrain is a part, in Yemen; calls on the European Union and its Member States to ensure that no jobs will be lost as a result of the implementation of this embargo;
14. Urges EU to ensure that human rights are mainstreamed across all areas of cooperation with Bahrain, including in the EU-Bahrain cooperation agreement which was recently concluded and did not include reference to human rights; strongly affirms that the agreement should not be implemented in such a way that business interests are advanced at the expense of human rights;
15. Regrets the EU and its Member States have not responded in a resolute manner to the egregious human rights violations committed in Bahrain; demands that the geopolitical importance of Bahrain should not condition the condemnation of the regression of human rights in Bahrain;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the European Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the Government and the

Parliament of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and the UN Human Rights Council.