



Plenary sitting

B9-0352/2022

5.7.2022

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 in Tajikistan's Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province (2022/2753(RSP))

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

B9-0352/2022

European Parliament resolution on The situation in Tajikistan’s Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Province (2022/2753(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- #— having regard to its previous resolutions on Tajikistan,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the United Nations Convention against Torture,
- having regard to the EU Statement on the latest developments in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region in Tajikistan at the OSCE Permanent Council No. 1375 in Vienna of 26 May 2022,
- having regard to the UN Special rapporteurs’ Joint letter to the Government of Tajikistan of 11 March 2022,
- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas protests erupted in the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous region (GBAO) in May 2022 following months of persecution of local people after the November protests of 2021; whereas Tajik citizens in GBAO were peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and assembly to protest abuses against their community when the police engaged in excessive force;
- B. whereas Tajik authorities claim the protests were organized by criminal groups with connections to terrorist organizations; whereas the police violently dispersed the protests, with military support deployed from the capital, Dushanbe; whereas on 18 May 2022, the Tajik authorities announced a special “anti-terrorism operation”;
- C. whereas several people were killed during those violent clashes, with reports of alleged extrajudicial killings; whereas Tajik police detained dozens of Gorno-Badakhshan locals in connection with the protests, including an independent journalist and civil rights defender, Ulfatkhonim Mamadshoeva;
- D. whereas the police accuse Ulfatkhonim Mamadshoeva of publicly calling for violence to change the constitutional order and have categorized her case as “secret,” which makes monitoring the case impossible;
- E. whereas freedom of the media and expression have been further repressed in the country since 2015, and the recent violence in GBAO has further increased pressure on media not to report, or to report only the state-supported version of events; whereas recently a court in Dushanbe ordered two independent bloggers, Daleri Imomali and Abdullo Ghurbati, to be detained for two months pending trial on charges of cooperating with banned organizations and political parties, and allegedly beating a police officer;

- F. whereas at least 13 members of the civil society based "Commission 44", including the director of the Pamir Lawyers' Association Manuchehr Kholiknazarov, Faromuz Irgashov and Khursand Mamadshoev were detained on 28 and 29 May 2022 in GBAO on trumped-up charges;
- G. whereas the central government cut internet and mobile connectivity in GBAO in May; whereas connectivity was previously cut in November and only partially restored in late March; where this has made international civil society organisations' communication with the region extremely difficult;
- H. whereas since 2012, harassment and persecution by Tajik authorities in GBAO has periodically escalated to violent stand-offs between the population and the military; whereas Tajikistan's human rights record remains one of the worst in the region with an ongoing crackdown on freedom of expression and the political opposition, the targeting of independent lawyers, journalists, bloggers, as well as their families;
1. Deeply regrets the loss of lives in GBAO in Tajikistan and condemns the Tajik authorities violent crackdown against protesters in November 2021 and May 2022;
 2. Calls on Tajik authorities to immediately release those arbitrarily detained and drop all charges against them, including Ulfatkhonim Mamadshoeva, Daleri Imomali, Abdullo Ghurbati, Manuchehr Kholiknazarov, Faromuz Irgashov and Khursand Mamadshoev;
 3. Calls on the Tajik authorities to set up an independent investigation into the violent clashes in GBAO in May 2022 and November 2021, in particular the use of force by the police, the death of civilians and reports about the alleged acts of torture by the security forces, including alleged extrajudicial killings of peaceful protesters and regular residents of several GBAO villages; insists that all those responsible must be brought to justice;
 4. Urges the government of Tajikistan to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including people's right to life, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of the media in GBAO and in the rest of the country, in line with international law; calls on Tajik authorities to refrain from excessive use of force against protesters and targeted harassment of residents of GBAO;
 5. Recalls the importance of implementing international standards on the non-discrimination and protection of indigenous and minority populations in Tajikistan, including in the areas of education, health, culture and business;
 6. Condemns all attempts at intimidating media workers, human rights defenders, independent lawyers and civil society or interfering with their legitimate work, and calls on Tajik authorities to stop all harassment against them and instead protect them from any undue influence, so they can carry out their work without any hindrance or fear of reprisals;

7. Urges Tajik authorities to fully restore communications in GBAO to allow citizens access to information and refrain from cutting communications links in the future; calls on Tajik authorities to cease disinformation about the protests and developments in GBAO on state television;
8. Recalls the importance of the right to a fair trial and calls on Tajik authorities to stop classifying investigations and prosecutions as “secret”; insists that all those detained in connection with the protests and situation in GBAO must be protected from torture, and have free and unimpeded access to a lawyer of their own choice, to independent doctors and are free to communicate with their family members;
9. Urges Tajik authorities to allow immediate access to GBAO’s Rushan District for international humanitarian and human rights organisations to monitor the situation, document human rights violations and provide assistance to the victims of human rights violations;
10. Calls on Tajik authorities to reopen the access to GBAO for citizens and keep the transport routes open to the whole region, and make every effort to stop a humanitarian crisis from unfolding there by providing goods and medical care for the population;
11. Calls on Tajikistan to implement conflict-prevention measures that meet international human rights standards, and to engage in a constructive dialogue with the residents of GBAO, in order to find a long-term solution to residents’ grievances and avoid further violence;
12. Calls on the Tajik authorities to open invitations to all UN Special Rapporteurs and implement the recommendations of international and regional bodies including those of a group of UN Special Rapporteurs issued in March 2022;
13. Reiterates that the free and independent work of civil society organisations and the media is a cornerstone of a democratic society; therefore calls on the Commission, the EEAS and the Member States to increase support for civil society, independent NGOs, human rights defenders, and independent media active in Tajikistan, including sustainable funding, emergency visas and temporary shelter in the EU;
14. Calls on the EU Delegation and national diplomatic representations in Tajikistan to closely monitor the situation and trials on the ground, publicly raise cases of human rights defenders, support victims of human rights violations and ensure independent investigations take place;
15. Calls on the HR/VP and the Member States to continuously raise the issue of human rights in Tajikistan and GBAO at international organisations, such as the UN;
16. Asks the Council, the EEAS, and the Commission to mainstream human rights and civil society consultation across any dialogues between the EU, its member states and Tajikistan, as well as live up to their commitment to gender mainstreaming;
17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security

Policy, the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and to the President, Government and the Parliament of Tajikistan.

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