



Plenary sitting

B9-0356/2022

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 S&D Group

B9-0356/2022

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 Joint Statement on Developments in GBAO from the Delegation of the European Union to Tajikistan and the Embassies of France, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America of 18 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 activists 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; 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 curtailed in the country, 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, including smear campaigns against

local residents; 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;
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. Urges Tajik authorities to respect freedom of expression and stop preventing journalists from carrying out their professional activities; calls on the immediate release of Journalists and bloggers Ulfatkhonim Mamadshoeva, Daleri Imomali, Abdullo Ghurbati and others currently in detention for their work;
 3. Urges the Tajik government to immediately restore communications to the GBAO region to ensure that citizens are able to access information;
 4. Urges the Tajik government to set up an immediate and independent investigation into abuse of power and alleged extrajudicial killings of peaceful protesters and regular residents of several GBAO villages during and after the May protests, as well as November 2021 protests;
 5. Urges 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;
 6. Calls on 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;
 7. 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;

8. 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;
9. 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;
10. Urges the Tajik authorities to address in good faith the concerns of GBAO residents and to engage in a meaningful dialogue with GBAO citizens and civil society representatives like "Commission 44" in order to achieve a sustainable settlement and peaceful future for the region;
11. Calls on the European Commission and EEAS to closely monitor the situation in GBAO and broader human rights situation in Tajikistan, including by publicly raising the cases of human rights defenders, monitoring the trials on the ground, supporting victims of human rights violations and advocating for independent investigations of alleged human rights violations;

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 Pa