



Plenary sitting

B9-0439/2022

3.10.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the death of Mahsa Amini and the repression of women's rights protesters in Iran
(2022/2849(RSP))

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on behalf of The Left Group

B9-0439/2022

European Parliament resolution on the death of Mahsa Amini and the repression of women's rights protesters in Iran (2022/2849(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
 - having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,
 - having regard to the statements of the UN Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the death of Mahsa Amini and the crackdown on protests in Iran,
 - having regard to the report of the UN Secretary-General of 4 August 2021 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,
 - having regard to the declaration by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on behalf of the EU of 25 September 2022 on Iran,
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in recent months, Iran's morality police has expanded street patrols, subjecting women perceived to be wearing 'loose hijab' to verbal and physical harassment and arrest; whereas Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian woman from the Kurdish minority, died in custody after being detained by morality police and accused of violating the country's conservative dress code; whereas Mahsa Amini's death has highlighted the oppression and marginalisation of women in Iran and casts a light on the ill-treatment of the country's non-Persian ethnic minorities, particularly its substantial Kurdish population;
- B. whereas thousands of people have taken to the streets all over Iran, including in Tehran, Isfahan, Karaj, Mashhad, Rasht, Saqqez and Sanandaj, in protests against Amini's death; whereas women have played a prominent role in the protests, including by waving and burning their veils; whereas these protests are the largest to sweep the country since demonstrations in 2019, when around 1 500 people were killed in a crackdown on protesters – the bloodiest confrontation in the Islamic Republic of Iran's history;
- C. whereas as a result of the US sanctions regime, economic mismanagement by the

government and corruption, in particular during the COVID-19 pandemic, Iran faces significant social and economic challenges; whereas the effects of climate change, which caused water and electricity shortages during the summer, are impacting the country dramatically; whereas large parts of the population are increasingly being pushed below the poverty line; whereas high inflation and widespread unemployment have compounded widening income and economic disparities; whereas these factors have been fuelling the protests;

- D. whereas despite repeated calls for restraint by national and international actors, including the UN Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the response of the Iranian security and police forces to demonstrations has been extremely disproportionate and deadly; whereas at least 76 persons have been killed by security forces, including women and children, and hundreds have been injured; whereas reports indicate that more than 1 200 protesters have been arrested, including human rights defenders, lawyers, civil society activists and at least 23 journalists;
- E. whereas the protests have been especially intense in northwest Iran, where many members of the country's Kurdish minority live; whereas the provinces in which Arabs and other minorities are concentrated have suffered for years from both economic hardship and severe environmental problems, which have been neglected by Iran's centralised development strategy, creating wide socioeconomic gaps between the centre and the periphery and an unbalanced distribution of state resources in the country;
- F. whereas Iran's constitution grants ethnic minorities equal rights, allowing them to use their own languages and practice their own traditions; whereas however, members of minority communities in Iran continue to be targeted by the authorities, including for their advocacy for minority rights, such as mother-tongue education; whereas Article 49 of the Iranian Constitution has been increasingly used to confiscate the property of minorities, particularly the Baha'i religious minority;
- G. whereas after solidarity demonstrations in Erbil, the capital of the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Region of Iraq, Iranian forces unleashed drone and artillery attacks on this region in northern Iraq;
- H. whereas university students in Iran have acted in solidarity with the protesters against Mahsa's death by boycotting their classes and demonstrating against repression;
- I. whereas Iranian authorities have increased attacks and violence against journalists covering the protests; whereas at least 20 journalists have been arrested and many have been summoned for questioning and threatened;
- J. whereas since the beginning of the protests, Iranian authorities have severely restricted internet access and blocked messaging platforms; whereas the disruption to communications services has seriously affected people's ability to exchange information, carry out economic activities and access public services;
- K. whereas in February 2022, the Iranian Parliament ratified the general section of the 'User Protection Bill', further restricting the information environment and isolating Iran from the global internet; whereas among other issues, the bill delegates control over international gateways to the security forces and the army and requires social media

platforms to cooperate with the latter in its surveillance and censorship;

- L. whereas on 1 November 2021, the Guardian Council approved the ‘Youthful Population and Protection of the Family Law’, which has had detrimental consequences for the right of women and girls to sexual and reproductive healthcare;
- M. whereas Iranian LGBTQI rights defenders Zahra Sedighi Hamedani, age 31, and Elham Chubdar, age 24, were sentenced to death by the Revolutionary Court of Urmia on charges of ‘corruption on earth through the promotion of homosexuality’; whereas they were sentenced for discriminatory reasons tied to their real or perceived sexual orientations and/or gender identities, their peaceful LGBTQI rights activism, including on social media, and their association with LGBTQI asylum seekers in Iraq; whereas a third LGBTQI activist, Soheila Ashrafi, age 52, who is currently being held in Urmia Central Prison along with Sedighi Hamedani and Chubdar, is awaiting a verdict on similar charges;
1. Expresses its solidarity with the people in Iran who are fighting for women’s, LGBTQI, social and human rights, for the end of corruption and mismanagement, and against poverty and repression; calls on the Iranian Government and Parliament to urgently address the underlying reasons for the protests and immediately end the ongoing repression;
 2. Is outraged by the arrest of Mahsa Amini and her death in custody; stresses that Mahsa Amini is another victim of Iran’s sustained repression and systematic discrimination against women and of the imposition of discriminatory dress codes that deprive women of bodily autonomy and the freedoms of opinion, expression and belief;
 3. Expresses its condolences to and deep solidarity with the family of Mahsa Amini; calls on the Iranian Government to ensure an impartial and effective investigation into Mahsa Amini’s tragic death and into allegations of torture and ill-treatment by an independent competent authority that will ensure, in particular, that her family has access to truth and justice;
 4. Is appalled by the ongoing repression of women for objecting to compulsory veiling and urges the Iranian Government to respect the freedom of Iranian women to choose their own dress code; stresses that it is high time to repeal all discriminatory laws and regulations that impose mandatory hijab;
 5. Deeply deplores that there has been no progress towards adopting the bill on violence against women, presented to the Iranian Parliament in January 2021; believes that, while still requiring further improvements to be compliant with international standards, the bill would have introduced some positive changes and can still do so, notably criminalising violence against women in Iran;
 6. Urges the Iranian Government to immediately repeal the ‘Youthful Population and Protection of the Family Law’, to take measures to end the criminalisation of abortion and to ensure that all women can access all necessary health services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, in a manner that is safe, affordable and consistent with their human rights;

7. Calls for the immediate release of the peaceful protesters, journalists and human rights defenders arrested during the protests; calls on the Iranian authorities to ensure that the treatment of protesters, journalists and human rights defenders while in detention complies with the conditions set out in the UN's Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, including providing detainees with immediate access to lawyers;
8. Denounces the repressive measures against trade union activists and those campaigning for workers' rights, such as the arrest of 230 teachers on 1 May 2022 who were in dispute with the authorities; calls for the release of the 23 activist leaders who are still in detention;
9. Denounces the violence by Iranian security forces against the protesters all over the country who are exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly; is shocked at the loss of life of so many innocent people during the protests and expresses its deep solidarity with the families of those who have died or been injured; urges the Iranian Government to exercise maximum restraint when handling protests, in accordance with the relevant international norms and standards; demands that the Iranian authorities ensure the full implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is party;
10. Is appalled by the scale of the deaths in detention, both as a result of violence and ill-treatment by officials and of a lack of timely access to medical care, which is of serious concern;
11. Denounces the persistent impunity for human rights violations in Iran, including the recurring deaths of protesters owing to the alleged use of lethal force by security forces, notably in November 2019, July 2021 and May 2022; urgently calls on the Iranian authorities to take tangible measures towards achieving accountability for human rights violations, and to ensure respect for the basic rights of those who call for change;
12. Calls on the Iranian authorities to ensure prompt, independent and impartial investigations into all violations that have taken place, including the killing of protesters and reported deaths and ill-treatment in custody, and insists that those responsible be held accountable;
13. Urges the Government of Iran to respect Iranians' right to exercise their freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association and, in addition to investigating the violations that have already occurred, to strongly restrict the security forces' use of force, as provided for under the relevant international norms and standards;
14. Calls on the Iranian authorities to fully restore internet access, condemns all measures to intentionally prevent or disrupt access to or the dissemination of information online in violation of international human rights law, and calls on Iran to refrain from and cease such measures;
15. Urges the Iranian authorities to immediately stop the crackdown on journalists covering the protests and to immediately lift all restrictions on the right to information;
16. Is seriously concerned about the arrests, temporary detentions and physical assaults of

human rights defenders during the protests and calls on Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release all detained human rights defenders;

17. Calls on the Iranian authorities to address all forms of discrimination against persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, including the Baluch, Kurds, Arabs, Baha'is, Christians and LGBTQI persons, and to immediately and unconditionally release all those imprisoned for exercising their right to freedom of religion, belief or sexual orientation; calls on the authorities in Iran to stop persecuting individuals on the basis of their sexual preferences or orientations and to cease criminalising the LGBTQI community in Iran;
18. Is deeply concerned about the death penalty for Zahra Sedighi Hamedani and Elham Chubdar and calls on the Iranian authorities to immediately overturn their convictions and death sentences and release the two women; condemns, in the strongest possible terms, the application of the death penalty for same-sex relations, which are still illegal in Iran; reiterates its strong opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances and stresses that no moral, legal or religious justification may be used; calls on Iran to introduce an immediate moratorium on the use of the death penalty as a step towards abolishing it;
19. Condemns the violation of Iraq's territorial integrity and calls on Iran to immediately stop the attacks on Iraqi territory inhabited by the Kurdish population;
20. Calls on the UN, particularly its Human Rights Council, to launch without delay a comprehensive investigation into the events that have taken place in recent weeks, led by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Iran, with the aim of shedding light on the allegations of grave human rights violations in the country since the protests began, and calls on Iran to give full, unrestricted access to those conducting this inquiry;
21. Reaffirms that respect for human rights is one of the core components in the development of EU-Iran relations; calls for a European Parliament delegation to be sent to Teheran to raise its concerns about recent events;
22. Calls for the EU to raise human rights violations in its bilateral relations with Iran; calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to ensure that the European External Action Service continues to raise human rights matters in the context of the EU-Iran High Level Dialogue;
23. Calls for the EU to undertake all necessary diplomatic initiatives that could promote real dialogue and mutual respect, and to avoid policies that threaten sovereignty and peace in the wider area of the Middle East;
24. Supports targeted measures against Iranian officials responsible for serious human rights violations; highlights the negative impact of the unilateral extraterritorial sanctions that the US re-imposed after it withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the economic and social situation in Iran, which has mainly affected ordinary Iranians and their enjoyment of their economic and social rights;

25. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Government and Parliament of Iran, the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European External Action Service.