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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0541/2022**

22.11.2022

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Commission

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

on the situation of human rights in the context of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar  
(2022/2948(RSP))

**Anna Fotyga, Charlie Weimers, Angel Dzhambazki, Beata Mazurek,  
Valdemar Tomaševski, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Zbigniew Kuźmiuk,  
Denis Nesci, Beata Kempa, Carlo Fidanza, Nicola Procaccini, Raffaele  
Stancanelli, Hermann Tertsch**  
on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of human rights in the context of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar (2022/2948(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Qatar,
  - having regard the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 18 May 2022 on a strategic partnership with the Gulf (JOIN(2022)0013),
  - having regard to the EU-Qatar Cooperation Arrangement of 7 March 2018,
  - having regard to the Cooperation Agreement concluded between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council in 1989<sup>1</sup>,
  - having regard to the EU Guidelines on the Death Penalty,
  - having regard to the Arab Charter on Human Rights,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
  - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
  - having regard to international labour standards, in particular the conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organization (ILO),
  - having regard to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief of 1981,
  - having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984,
  - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Qatar won the FIFA World Cup bidding process amid credible allegations of bribery and corruption; whereas authoritarian regimes have used the sponsorship and hosting of international sporting events to improve their international reputation, a practice also known as ‘sportswashing’, with examples including the 2014 Sochi Olympics and 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia, the 2022 Beijing Olympics in China, and the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar;
- B. whereas Qatari citizens are among the wealthiest in the world but most of the Qatari

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<sup>1</sup> Cooperation Agreement between the European Economic Community, of the one part, and the countries parties to the Charter of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (the State of the United Arab Emirates, the State of Bahrain, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar and the State of Kuwait) of the other part, OJ L 54, 25.2.1989, p. 3.

population consists of non-citizens with no political rights, few civil liberties and limited access to economic opportunities; whereas Qatar has spent hundreds of billions of US dollars on the organisation of the FIFA World Cup, but without an adequate outlay on labour standards; whereas, during the building of the World Cup infrastructure in Qatar, it is estimated that more than 6 500 migrant workers have died due to poor working and safety conditions, with at least 37 directly related to the building of stadiums; whereas most of the migrant workers have hailed from India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka;

- C. whereas Qatar has been a member of the ILO since 1972 and has ratified six of its conventions, including five of the fundamental conventions; whereas, in 2017, Qatar and the ILO embarked on the first phase of a technical cooperation programme to carry out extensive labour reforms; whereas the second phase of the technical cooperation programme got underway in July 2021 and is due to run until the end of 2023;
- D. whereas Qatar notes that it introduced new labour laws in August 2021, which allow migrant workers to change jobs before the end of their contracts without first obtaining their employers' consent, the previous inability to do so having been one of the key aspects of the troublesome *kafala* (sponsorship) system; whereas human rights groups have stated that these changes to the labour laws in favour of migrant workers have come too late or been too weakly implemented for many workers to benefit from them; whereas many migrant workers continue to face a range of abuses, including wage theft, forced labour and exploitation;
- E. whereas freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of association are severely repressed in Qatar; whereas unfair trials remain a concern and women continue to face multiple levels of discrimination in the country, in both law and practice; whereas freedom of religion also remains restricted in Qatar; whereas the Baha'i community faces severe persecution, including being blacklisted, expelled and permanently refused re-entry into the country; whereas sexual acts between males are illegal in Qatar, with a punishment of up to several years in prison, a fine and the possibility of the death penalty for Muslims under Qatari and Sharia law;
- F. whereas Qatar plays a major role in financing Islamist groups in Europe, including notably organisations associated with the Muslim Brotherhood; whereas most of the funding is provided by Qatar Charity to help build mosques and Islamic centres in Europe, with the aim of strengthening the Islamist identity and entrenching political Islam in Muslim communities throughout Europe; whereas the Qatar-funded Al Jazeera news channel is known for and has been implicated in the spreading of disinformation and propaganda globally;
- G. whereas FIFA issued a strict 'code of conduct' ahead of the World Cup, warning that anyone not complying by the rules would be banished from the tournament; whereas the strict guidelines include language on diversity, sexual orientation, religion, political opinions and discrimination, and aim to stop these issues from being raised in Qatar, with indications that doing so could have severe consequences, which can be viewed as an attempt at censorship;
- H. whereas foreigners visiting the country have been required to download the official

World Cup application, Hayya, while those visiting healthcare facilities will have to download the contact-tracing application Ehteraz; whereas both applications have been labelled as spyware by many EU data authorities, which have warned that the software provides extensive access to people's data, as well as the ability to read, delete or change their content and even to make direct calls;

- I. whereas extensive restrictions on media reporting regarding the 2022 World Cup have been put in place by the Qatari authorities; whereas journalists have previously been detained in Qatar for reporting on issues considered controversial by the authorities and related to the preparations for the 2022 World Cup, such as the housing and working conditions of migrant workers;
1. Strongly condemns the use of sportswashing; calls on international sports federations and sports organisations in general not to be susceptible to authoritarian regimes and their bribes and to fully ensure the integrity and fairness of sport;
2. Welcomes the changes to the *kafala* system by the Qatari Government as positive developments; calls on the Qatari Government to abolish the *kafala* system and improve migrant workers' rights in the country to be fully in line with international standards; welcomes the close cooperation between Qatar and the ILO in supporting a wide range of labour reforms in the country through a technical cooperation programme; regrets, however, the fact that this cooperation only began in 2018; notes that Qatar has undertaken comprehensive labour reforms to improve the conditions and rights of migrant workers through adopting new legislation, introducing new labour administration systems and improving existing ones, and enhancing labour relations, and calls on the Qatari authorities to uphold these commitments after the World Cup;
3. Regrets the extensive loss of life among and injuries to migrant workers who built the World Cup infrastructure in Qatar, and extends its condolences to and expresses its solidarity with their families; calls for urgent, independent and credible investigations into the deaths and injuries, and for those responsible to be held to account; calls on the Qatari authorities to compensate the families of those deceased;
4. Calls on the Qatari Government and authorities to fully respect the human rights of all those living in and visiting the state, including their freedom of religion; strongly condemns the systemic persecution of the Baha'i community and calls on the Qatari authorities to end their blacklisting and deportation from the country and allow them to re-enter;
5. Condemns FIFA's hypocrisy in imposing a strict code of conduct during the World Cup in Qatar as a measure of censorship; condemns the threats made by Qatari officials against journalists from the Danish channel TV 2, who were broadcasting from a street in Doha; reminds the Qatari authorities that freedom of speech and the media, and the safety and security of journalists, must be upheld;
6. Calls on FIFA and other international sports organisations to cooperate closely with the ILO while organising international sporting events such as the World Cup or the Olympic Games;
7. Condemns and expresses grave concern about the Qatari funding of Islamist

organisations and religious institutions in Europe and calls on the Qatari Government to cease such funding immediately;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service, 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, and the Prime Minister, Government and Parliament of the State of Qatar.