



Plenary sitting

B9-0061/2023

17.1.2023

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 of journalists in Morocco, notably the case of Omar Radi

(2023/2506(RSP))

Georgios Kyrtos, Petras Auštrevičius, José Ramón Bauzá Díaz, Jordi Cañas, Katalin Cseh, Vlad Gheorghe, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Svenja Hahn, Karen Melchior, Javier Nart, Urmas Paet, Dragoș Pîslaru, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Michal Šimečka, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Ramona Strugariu, Hilde Vautmans
on behalf of the Renew Group

European Parliament resolution on The situation of journalists in Morocco, notably the case of Omar Radi

(2023/2506(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure;
- A. whereas the situation of press freedom in Morocco has been continuously deteriorating over the last decade, dropping to 135th in the 2022 World Press Freedom Index; whereas numerous journalists have been judicially harassed, intimidated and sentenced to long prison sentences for their work; whereas Moroccan authorities have extended their repressive measures against free journalism also outside its borders as in Ignacio Cembrero's case;
- B. whereas according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, Moroccan authorities have filed sex crimes since 2018 against multiple independent journalists to target their reporting; whereas in 2020 Reporters Without Borders, alongside feminist organization Khmissa and Morocco's Human Rights Association, appealed to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women regarding the misuse of sex charges to discredit journalists;
- C. whereas independent investigative journalist Omar Radi was summoned over twenty times by authorities for his work; whereas he has been detained since July 2020 and sentenced to 6 years in prison on trumped-up charges of espionage as well as rape charges in July 2021; whereas numerous due process guarantees were violated, rendering the trial inherently unfair and biased, including his pre-trial detention without justification for one-year and no access to his own case-file; whereas he was awarded the 2022 Press Freedom Prize by Reporters Without Borders;
- D. whereas in other trials in September 2021 journalist Taoufik Bouachrine was sentenced to 15 years in prison on sex charges with wide violations of their due process guarantees during his trial; whereas his independent newspaper had to shutdown since; whereas in February 2022 journalist Souleiman Raissouni was sentenced to 5 years in prison, under similar unfair conditions;
- 1. urges the Moroccan authorities to respect freedom of expression and media freedom, to immediately and unconditionally release all imprisoned journalists who have been arbitrarily detained solely for performing their work, to provide to imprisoned journalists namely Omar Radi, Souleiman Raissouni and Taoufik Bouachrine a fair trial with all guarantees of due process, including provisional freedom and to immediately cease harassment against all journalists; urges the authorities to respect their international human rights obligations in line with provisions of the EU-Morocco Association Agreement;
- 2. strongly condemns the misuse of allegations of sexual assault to deter journalists from performing their duties; believes such misuse endangers women rights;

3. is concerned about allegations that Moroccan authorities tried to corrupt elected Members of the European Parliament; reiterates its determination to fully investigate and address cases of corruption by third countries seeking to buy influence in the European Parliament;
4. urges Moroccan authorities to end its surveillance of journalists, including via NSO's Pegasus spyware, and to enact legislation to protect them against such practices and all forms of pressure, discrimination and unfair trials, by reforming its legislation to comply with article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the EU HR/VP and Moroccan authorities;