



Plenary sitting

B9-0067/2023

16.1.2023

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 EU response to the protests and executions in Iran
(2023/2511(RSP))

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on behalf of the Renew Group

B9-0067/2023

**European Parliament resolution on the EU response to the protests and executions in Iran
(2023/2511(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran,
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on the death penalty,
 - having regard to the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (EU Magnitsky Act) of 7 December 2020,
 - having regard to Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/2428 of 12 December 2022 implementing Regulation (EU) No 359/2011 concerning restrictive measures directed against certain persons, entities and bodies in view of the situation in Iran¹,
 - having regard to Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1 of 20 October 2021 amending Regulation (EU) 2021/821 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the list of dual-use items²,
 - having regard to the statement by the Spokesperson of the European External Action Service (EEAS) of 7 January 2023 on the latest executions in Iran,
 - having regard to the statement by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights of 10 January 2023 and to the statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran of 8 December 2022, both calling for an immediate moratorium on the death penalty and for the halting of all executions,
 - having regard to the resolution of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of 14 December 2022 entitled ‘Removal of the Islamic Republic of Iran from the Commission on the Status of Women for the remainder of its 2022-2026 term’,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 (ICCPR), and to Iran’s ratification thereof in June 1975,
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas according to credible reports, Iran executed more than 500 people in 2022, not

¹ OJ L 318 I, 12.12.2022, p. 1.

² OJ L 3, 6.1.2022, p. 1.

including the more than 450 protesters whom the security forces killed during the violent crackdown on public protests³; whereas the Iranian authorities have issued death sentences for protest-related charges, but have failed to conduct any transparent investigation into the use of lethal force by security officers against protesters; whereas prisoners in Iran are often subjected to torture, leading to concerns that death sentences are being handed down to prisoners on the basis of false confessions;

- B. whereas the violent suppression of the nationwide protests and strikes that were sparked by the murder of Mahsa Jina Amini by the police is illustrative of the ongoing human rights crisis in Iran; whereas this crisis is perpetuated by the systemic impunity of the Iranian Government and its security apparatus, which has permitted widespread torture as well as extrajudicial executions and other unlawful killings;
- C. whereas according to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, criminal proceedings and the death penalty are being weaponised by the Iranian Government to punish individuals participating in protests and to strike fear into the population so as to stamp out dissent⁴; whereas at least 20 protesters have been sentenced to death thus far and up to 100 more face charges for capital crimes;
- D. whereas the arbitrary executions of Mohammad Mehdi Karami and Seyed Mohammad Hosseini were carried out on 7 January 2023, and there is a risk that Mohammad Ghobadlou, a young protester, may suffer the same fate, as the Supreme Court confirmed his conviction and death sentence on 2 January 2023; whereas dozens of others face the death penalty because of their participation in the protests;
- E. whereas this violent repression of millions of Iranian protesters requires a firm and strong European response; whereas the current European restrictive measures (including asset freezes and visa bans for individuals and entities responsible for grave human rights violations, and a ban on exports to Iran of equipment which might be used for internal repression) are insufficient by far to deter the Iranian regime;
- F. whereas the worldwide abolition of the death penalty is one of the main objectives of the EU's human rights policy;
- G. whereas Iran imposes and carries out the death penalty against minors in contravention of its obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; whereas between 2009 and September 2020 at least 67 executions of juvenile offenders were reported; whereas 85 juvenile offenders were on death row in Iran in January 2022;
- H. whereas the death penalty is disproportionately applied to people belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, notably the Baluch, Kurds, Arabs and Baha'is; whereas the penal code criminalises homosexuality and the death penalty is used to target LGBTIQ persons;
- I. whereas the Iranian authorities are deliberately disrupting internet and mobile connections and severely restricting social media platforms to undermine the ability of

³ <https://iranhr.net/en/articles/5617/>.

⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/01/respect-lives-voices-iranians-and-listen-grievances-pleads-un-human-rights>.

Iranian citizens to access communication technologies in a secure and private manner and to organise peaceful assemblies;

- J. whereas according to reports, numerous foreigners, including EU nationals, have been arrested in recent days for their alleged involvement in the protests; whereas other EU nationals are being arbitrarily detained in Iran, including the Belgian national Olivier Vandecasteele, who was sentenced to a total of 40 years in prison and dozens of lashes on the basis of a series of fabricated allegations; whereas seven French citizens are still being detained in Iran, including Cécile Kohler, a teacher and trade unionist, and her partner Jacques Paris, who were arrested in early May while touring Iran, the Franco-Iranian researcher Fariba Adelkhah, who was arrested in June 2019 and sentenced to five years in prison for ‘undermining national security’, and Benjamin Brière, who was arrested in May 2020 and sentenced to eight years and eight months in prison for ‘espionage’;
- K. whereas Iran is supporting the Russian Federation in the illegal war against Ukraine, including by supplying military drones and training;
1. Expresses its deepest condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of all innocent victims of the Iranian regime;
 2. Feels admiration, now more than ever, for the incredible courage of the Iranian women at the forefront of the demonstrations following the death of Mahsa Amini, and who fight every day for the recognition of their rights embodied in the slogan ‘Jin, jivan, azadi’; recalls that many of these women have died fighting for their freedom, while others have been detained by the security forces and suffer constant abuse such as rape and torture;
 3. Strongly condemns the widespread, intentional and disproportionate use of force by the Iranian security forces against peaceful protesters and calls on the Iranian authorities to stop their continued, systematic and unacceptable violence against their own citizens; insists that the Iranian authorities allow a swift and impartial investigation into the killings of all protesters;
 4. Calls on the EEAS and the Member States to help collect and store evidence of international crimes via their representations in order to contribute to possible future cases at the International Criminal Court;
 5. Welcomes UN Human Rights Council Resolution S-35/1 of 24 November 2022 entitled ‘Deteriorating situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, especially with respect to women and children’ and the decision therein to establish an independent international fact-finding mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, and calls for the EU to provide support for the implementation of the mission;
 6. Demands that the Iranian authorities immediately and unconditionally release and drop all charges against anyone who has been imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly in connection with the protests; stresses that fundamental rights such as freedom of expression and assembly must always be respected and calls on the Iranian authorities to live up to their international obligations, including under the ICCPR;

7. Calls on the Foreign Affairs Council to ensure the correct application and enforcement of the sanction regimes, and to add Iranian officials and other persons to the EU's list of individuals against whom restrictive measures in relation to serious human rights violations in Iran have been imposed and, more particularly, Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, President Ebrahim Raisi and Prosecutor General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri; calls for the individuals and entities providing the Iranian security forces with tools of suppression and directly involved in supplying the Russian Federation with battle drones and any other weapons used in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine also to be added; calls, furthermore, for an expansion and improved enforcement of the EU embargo list of dual-use products against Iran, including semiconductors, drone parts and other high-tech materials; strongly condemns Iran's support of Russia in the illegal war against Ukraine; calls on the Foreign Affairs Council to freeze and confiscate the assets of those who are on the EU sanction list, and to find ways to support the families of the people executed or imprisoned;
8. Regrets the fact that despite international efforts and the EU's leadership aimed at restoring the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), Iran is continuing to escalate its nuclear programme; deplores, moreover, the Iranian regime's supply of weapons to Russia for its war of aggression against Ukraine, and in response urges the Council to consider reinstating some of the restrictive measures imposed on Iran prior to the JCPOA;
9. Strongly condemns the Iranian authorities' increasing use of the death penalty and reiterates its fundamental opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances; reiterates its call on the Government of Iran to introduce an immediate moratorium on the use of the death penalty as a step towards abolishing it, and to commute all death sentences;
10. Calls on the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran to urgently amend Article 91 of the Islamic Penal Code of Iran to explicitly prohibit the use of the death penalty for crimes committed by persons below 18 years of age, in all circumstances and without any discretion for judges to impose the death penalty or life imprisonment without the possibility of release;
11. Reiterates its strong condemnation of the steadily deteriorating human rights situation in Iran, affecting women and in particular ethnic minorities such as the Azeris, Kurds, Lur, Baluch and Arabs, religious minorities such as Baha'is, Christians and Jews, LGBTIQ persons and anyone opposing the regime;
12. Expresses its concern that the burial rites for the deceased have been disrupted by the Islamic Republic of Iran, with the intentional and disproportionate use of force by Iranian security forces at funeral ceremonies, and calls on the Iranian authorities to respect the legitimate fundamental rights of the dead and to allow the burying of the deceased to take place with dignity; further expresses its concern that the names of the missing and dead are often not known, that their families have not been traced, and that bodies have often been found buried in unmarked graves;
13. Expresses its concern about the criminalisation of and violence against medical professionals by the security forces and calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to provide civilian medical personnel with all available assistance for providing impartial medical

aid;

14. Deplores the systematic use of torture in Iranian prisons and calls for the immediate cessation of all forms of torture and ill-treatment of all detainees; condemns the practice of denying detainees access to phone calls and family visits;
15. Calls on the Foreign Affairs Council to designate the IRGC (Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) in its entirety as a terrorist organisation and to take immediate measures to counter all propaganda activity by the IRGC in the EU; calls for the EU to counter the IRGC's global activities, particularly in the Middle East and in Ukraine, in coordination with the United States;
16. Calls for the EU to better coordinate and facilitate measures to ensure the safety of the Iranian diaspora in the EU, to restrict the access of sanctioned Iranian individuals and their family members to European facilities such as universities and to freeze their assets;
17. Calls for the EU, including the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), to continue raising human rights concerns with the Iranian authorities in bilateral and multilateral forums and to use all planned engagements with the Iranian authorities for that purpose, in particular in the context of the EU-Iran High Level Political Dialogue; reaffirms that respect for human rights is a core component in the development of EU-Iran relations;
18. Urges the Iranian authorities to immediately release all EU nationals arrested, including Olivier Vandecasteele and the seven French citizens still detained, and to drop all charges against them, and reiterates its call on the VP/HR and the Member States to do their utmost to ensure the release of all EU nationals currently imprisoned in Iran on dubious and fabricated charges;
19. Expresses concern at the continuous lobbying of the European institutions by reactionary Islamist associations or other lobby groups that do not share European values (such as the National Council of Resistance of Iran) , and which may amount to foreign interference in our democracies; condemns, in this context, the recent attacks by Iranian officials against the newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* and welcomes the launch of the investigation into the cyberattack on the newspaper following the publication of satirical cartoons; is of the opinion that the EU transparency register needs to have an option to restrict the access of certain individuals or organisations, or even fully expel them from the register;
20. Calls on the Commission to consider, under strict compliance with the principles of necessity and proportionality, allowing EU-based communications providers such as Starlink to offer tools, including videoconferencing, e-learning platforms, web maps and cloud services, to people in Iran in order to ensure that they have access to the online tools and platforms they need to exercise their human rights; in this context, calls for a re-evaluation of the existing EU sanctions against Iranian software and cloud services, such as ArvanCloud, to increase internet access for all Iranians;
21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, 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, the Islamic Consultative Assembly, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Office of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran.