



Plenary sitting

B9-0245/2023

9.5.2023

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 Algeria: Recent attacks against media freedom and freedom of expression, in particular the case of journalist Ihsane El-Kadi (2023/2661(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

Motion for a European Parliament resolution on Algeria: Recent attacks against media freedom and freedom of expression, in particular the case of journalist Ihsane El-Kadi (2023/2661(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas President Abdelmadjid Tebboune is in office since 19 December 2019 and Prime Minister Aymen Benabderrahmane since 30 June 2021: whereas political arrests and arbitrary detentions of peaceful Hirak and trade union activists, as well as journalists, have increased since the summer of 2019; whereas censorship, trials and severe punishment of independent media, often accused of plotting with foreign powers against national security, continue to worsen despite the official end of the Bouteflika government; whereas the Algerian parliament approved on 13th May a new media law that tightens control over the work of journalists and imposes new restrictions;
- B. whereas on 24 December 2022 Algerian authorities ordered the arbitrary detention of journalist Ihsane El Kadi and shut down of Interface media, his media company editing online outlets Radio M and Maghreb Emergent following several days before the publication of an analysis about the next presidential elections in Algeria in 2024 which was critical of the role of the Algerian army; whereas on 2 April 2023 Tribunal of Sidi M'hamed convicted El Kadi to a five-year sentence, on unfounded charges related to receiving funds for “political propaganda” and “to harm the security of the state” under Articles 95 and 95 bis of Algeria's Penal Code; whereas the process of El Kadi is still ongoing and his appeal trial will be on May 21 before the court of Algiers;
- C. whereas since 2019, the Algerian authorities have prosecuted and detained at least 11 other journalists and media workers; whereas since November the authorities have shut down at least three media outlets after they were accused of broadcasting online without authorization in order to continue with their efforts to silence audio-visual media; whereas several journalists have been prosecuted thanks to the broadening of the definition of terrorism in article 87bis of the 2021 Penal Code;
- 1. Urges the Algerian authorities to immediately release Ihsane El Kadi and all others who have been arbitrarily detained, and to respect freedom of expression and media freedom; calls on the Algerian authorities to reopen media outlets and to put a stop to the arrest and detention of political activists, journalists, and human rights defenders, or anyone who expresses a dissenting view or criticism of the government;
- 2. Urges the authorities to amend security-related charges in the Penal Code used to criminalize the right to freedom of expression including Article 95 bis and Article 196 bis and to review Law No. 14-04 on Audio-visual Activity to bring it into conformity with International human rights standards;

3. Recalls, as jointly agreed in the EU-Algeria Partnership Priorities, the importance of a pluralist press to consolidate the rule of law and fundamental freedoms such as freedom of expression;
4. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the VP/HR, the Council, the Commission, the EU Delegation in Algiers, the Government of Algeria, the UN Secretary-General, the UN Human Rights Council and the Council of Europe.