



Plenary sitting

B9-0064/2024

16.1.2024

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 Tajikistan: state repression against the independent media
(2024/2506(RSP))

Stelios Kouloglou
on behalf of The Left Group

**Motion for a European Parliament resolution on Tajikistan: state repression against the independent media
(2024/2506(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its Rule 144,
- A. Whereas since the crackdown against protesters in Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region in May 2022, the situation of the media in Tajikistan has deteriorated significantly; whereas independent media are subjected to partial shutdowns of websites, banned activities and being labelled as “extremist organizations”;
- B. whereas journalists face harassment, threats, judicial persecution, arbitrary detention, attacks and allegations of torture were made, including to extract false confessions; whereas female journalists are disproportionately subjected to intimidation, including through smear campaigns and online attacks on their personal lives; whereas seven journalists were sentenced to lengthy prison terms in what is widely seen as retaliation for their work;
- C. whereas UN experts deplored on July 2023 “criminal proceedings against human rights defenders” and expressed “grave concern about the apparent use of anti-terrorism legislation to silence critical voices”;
- 1. shares the concerns of the UN bodies and experts on the repression of journalists and human rights in the country as well as on the breaches to the freedom of press in the country; condemns the repression against the media in Tajikistan;
- 2. Urges the Tajikistan authorities fulfill with its international obligations and to refrain from using anti extremism legislation such as the 2020 “Law on Countering Extremism” and the 2021 “Law on Combating Terrorism” to unduly restrict freedom of expression;
- 3. Strongly condemns the arbitrary detention and convictions of independent journalists; reiterates that the access to justice and to a fair trial is a fundamental right; calls on the Tajik authorities to immediately and unconditionally release the seven journalists unduly detained for their legitimate work;
- 4. Strongly condemns the alleged use of torture and ill treatments on prisoners; calls on the Tajik authorities to investigate, prosecute, condemn and forbid any torture, and to ensure all those detained have adequate access to health care;
- 5. Calls on the Tajik authorities to ensure, in law and in practice, a safe and peaceful environment for journalists and human right defenders to carry out their work; calls on the Tajik authorities to cease the harassment of independent media, including all reprisals against journalists and unnecessary interference, threats, or website shutdowns; in particular the Tajik authorities to guarantee the space for free and independent

reporting on Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region;

6. Supports the call of UN Special Rapporteur “*for an impartial and transparent investigation according to international standards and measures to prevent tensions and escalation of violence*” in the GBAO region from November 2021
7. condemns the foreign interferences in the region and underlines the need for a EU-Central Asia strategy not be based on geostrategic interests but on mutual development in line with human rights and the UN Sustainable Development Goals;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution.