



TEXTS ADOPTED

P9_TA(2021)0355

The case of Ahmadreza Djalali in Iran

European Parliament resolution of 8 July 2021 on the case of Ahmadreza Djalali in Iran (2021/2785(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular those of 17 December 2020 on Iran, in particular the case of 2012 Sakharov Prize Laureate Nasrin Sotoudeh¹, of 19 September 2019 on Iran, notably the situation of women’s rights defenders and imprisoned EU dual nationals², of 13 December 2018 on Iran, notably the case of Nasrin Sotoudeh³ and of 31 May 2018 on the situation of imprisoned EU-Iranian dual nationals in Iran⁴,
- having regard to the statements on Iran of 18 March 2021 issued by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights requesting the immediate release of Dr Ahmadreza Djalali and of 25 November 2020 calling on Iran to halt his execution, as well as the opinion of its Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of 24 November 2017 concerning Ahmadreza Djalali (Islamic Republic of Iran),
- having regard to the statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran of 26 October 2020 urging accountability for violent protest crackdowns, and his report of 21 July 2020 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,
- having regard to the Fifth EU-Iran High-Level Dialogue of 9 December 2020,
- having regard to the EU guidelines on the death penalty, on torture and other cruel treatment, on freedom of expression online and offline and on human rights defenders,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, to which Iran is a party, and the safeguards against torture and arbitrary detention laid down in the Iranian Constitution,
- having regard to Iran’s presidential election of 18 June 2021,

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2020)0376.

² OJ C 171, 6.5.2021, p. 17.

³ OJ C 388, 13.11.2020, p. 127.

⁴ OJ C 76, 9.3.2020, p. 139.

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to Rules 144(5) and 132(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Swedish-Iranian national Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, who specialises in emergency medicine and is a scholar at Belgium's Vrije Universiteit Brussel and Italy's Università del Piemonte Orientale, was arrested on 24 April 2016 by the Iranian security forces; whereas he was sentenced to death on spurious espionage charges in October 2017 following a grossly unfair trial based on a confession extracted under torture; whereas the sentence was upheld by Iran's Supreme Court on 17 June 2018; whereas in a letter he wrote in Evin prison in Tehran, he stated that he had been imprisoned during a trip to Iran for refusing to spy on European institutions; whereas he was informed by the prosecutor's office on 24 November 2020 that his execution was imminent and was then transferred to solitary confinement for over 100 days until April 2021, after which he was transferred to one of the general wings; whereas he has been denied visits and phone calls with his family in Sweden; whereas his death sentence has not been commuted since his transfer to a general wing; whereas he has only had intermittent access to his lawyer in the past seven months and had no access prior to that;
 - B. whereas in November 2017, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded that the deprivation of liberty of Dr Ahmadreza Djalali – in violation of Articles 3, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Articles 7, 9, 10 and 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – is arbitrary and called for his release;
 - C. whereas the state of Dr Ahmadreza Djalali's health has become critical following months of prolonged solitary confinement; whereas he has been denied medical care from outside the prison since 2016 and has been forced to remain in a room with bright lights continuously switched on; whereas his physical and psychological condition has severely deteriorated since, with symptoms including sleep deprivation, dramatic weight loss and difficulty in speaking;
 - D. whereas Iran has been actively imprisoning foreign nationals in order to blackmail foreign governments; whereas at least a dozen EU nationals are being arbitrarily detained in Iran; whereas French-Iranian academic Fariba Adelkhah, a research director at Sciences Po in Paris, has been arbitrarily detained since June 2019, first at Evin prison and then under house arrest since October 2020; whereas French photographer Benjamin Brière has been arbitrarily detained since 26 May 2020 at Mashhad prison and whereas espionage charges were brought against him on 30 May 2021; whereas German-Iranian national Nahid Taghavi has been arbitrarily detained since October 2020 at Evin prison under dubious national security charges; whereas Iran does not recognise dual nationality, thereby limiting the access foreign embassies have to their dual nationals;
 - E. whereas Iran is also arbitrarily detaining its own citizens in dire conditions; whereas courts often deny defendants the right to a fair trial and restrict legal counselling and visits from consular authorities and UN and humanitarian organisations; whereas sentences are often based on unsubstantiated allegations; whereas Iran's judiciary system and judges are far from independent and do not meet international standards; whereas the Iranian authorities have not investigated allegations of torture and other serious violations of detainees' rights; whereas judicial harassment is being used to silence human rights defenders;

- F. whereas Iran has the world's highest number of executions per inhabitant;
- G. whereas the EU and its Member States have continuously engaged in diplomatic talks to improve relations with Iran, leading to the adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on 18 October 2015; whereas the EU remains committed to improving relations under certain conditions; whereas respect for human rights is an essential component for the further development of these relations;
1. Calls on Iran, under its newly elected President Ebrahim Raisi, to halt the imminent execution of Swedish-Iranian academic Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, to pardon and release him immediately and unconditionally, and to allow him to return to his family in Sweden; firmly condemns his torture, arbitrary detention and death sentence on unsubstantiated charges as documented in the 2017 opinion of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights's Working Group on Arbitrary Detention; urges Iran, pending the above, to immediately grant him regular contact with his family and lawyer, to guarantee his safety and provide him with urgent and adequate medical care; calls on Iran to stop threatening his family in Sweden and Iran;
 2. Deplores Iran's established policy of arbitrary detention of EU, UK and other nationals to extract political confessions;
 3. Urges Iran to immediately drop all charges against Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, as well as all arbitrarily detained EU nationals, including German nationals Nahid Taghavi and Jamshid Sharmahd, French nationals Benjamin Brière and Fariba Adelkhah, the latter of whom remains under a travel ban, and Austrian nationals Kamran Ghaderi and Massud Mossaheb, as well as UK nationals Morad Tahbaz, Anoosheh Ashoori, Mehran Raoof and Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, the latter of whom remains under house arrest;
 4. Deeply regrets the fact that since Parliament's resolution of 17 December 2020, no EU Member State has managed to visit arbitrarily detained EU nationals, including Dr Ahmadreza Djalali; reiterates its urgent call on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) and the EU Member States to do their utmost to prevent Dr Ahmadreza Djalali's execution;
 5. Calls on the Council to consider further targeted sanctions, including freezing the assets of the Iranian regime officials and entities involved in the arbitrary detention and sentencing to death of EU nationals, including, in the event of Dr Ahmadreza Djalali's continued detention, either using the current EU human rights sanctions regime against Iran or the EU's global human rights sanctions regime (EU Magnitsky Act);
 6. Welcomes the addition, following their role in the killing of at least 303 protesters in 2019, of eight Iranian individuals and three Iranian entities to the EU sanctions regime on 12 April 2021, which put them under asset freezes and travel bans; notes that it is the first time the EU has taken such a decision since 2013;
 7. Reiterates its strong opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances and stresses that no moral, legal or religious justification may be used; calls on Iran to introduce an immediate moratorium on the use of the death penalty as a step towards abolition;

8. Calls on Iran to also release political prisoners, including human rights defenders, as they have been arbitrarily detained solely for exercising their fundamental rights to the freedoms of expression, belief, association, publication, peaceful assembly and media freedom; calls on Iran to properly investigate the officials responsible for serious human rights violations, including the use of excessive and lethal force on protesters; denounces the systematic use of prolonged solitary confinement in violation of Iran's international obligations;
9. Urges the Council to raise human rights violations in its bilateral relations with Iran, in line with the statement jointly issued by the VP/HR and the Iranian Foreign Minister in April 2016; calls on the European External Action Service to continue to raise human rights matters in the context of the EU-Iran High-Level Dialogue; calls on the EU and its Member States to strengthen their protection of and support for human rights defenders, particularly women, including through emergency grants under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights;
10. Strongly condemns the steadily deteriorating human rights situation in Iran, including and especially for persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, due to systemic political, economic, social and cultural discrimination; deplores the alarming escalation in the use of the death penalty against protesters, dissidents and members of minority groups;
11. Calls on Iran to allow visits by and fully cooperate with all special procedures of the UN Human Rights Council, including the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran;
12. 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 UN Secretary-General, the Supreme Leader and the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Members of Iran's Majles.