
Human rights breaches in Russia, Equatorial Guinea and Eswatini

- Russia must release all political prisoners fighting for democracy in the country
- Equatoguinean dictatorial regime must end systemic political persecution
- Eswatini authorities need to start a comprehensive dialogue with opposition immediately

On Thursday, the European Parliament adopted three resolutions on the respect for human rights in Russia, Equatorial Guinea and Eswatini.

The recent deterioration of the inhuman imprisonment conditions of Alexey Navalny

MEPs call for the release of a 2021 Sakharov Prize laureate Alexey Navalny and all other brave political prisoners in Russia fighting for Russian democracy.

Until their release, the conditions of detention of political prisoners such as Navalny, who has been subject to ill treatment including torture and risks a new prison sentence of up to 25 years, have to comply with Russia's international obligations. In particular, Navalny needs access to doctors of his choice and to his lawyers, and communication with his family.

MEPs stress that the EU and the democratic community need a clear strategy to support victories for both Ukraine and for democracy in Russia, which would also be a victory for Navalny. They urge EU member states to assist Russian human rights defenders, pro-democracy activists and independent journalists in and outside Russia.

Parliament says Putin must be put on trial for crimes against his own population and urges the EU Council to adopt restrictive measures against those responsible for arbitrary prosecutions and torture of anti-war protesters.

The resolution was adopted by 497 votes in favour, 17 against and 33 abstentions. For more details, full text will be available [here](#). (19.01.2023)

Equatorial Guinea: violence against opposition activists, notably Julio Obama Mefuman

Parliament holds the Equatoguinean dictatorial regime responsible for the death of Julio Obama, a prominent dissident and a Spanish and Equatoguinean citizen. MEPs call for the liberation of three other members of the opposition movement MLGE3R. They urge Equatorial Guinea to fully cooperate with Spanish judicial authorities and strongly condemn the dictatorial regime's systemic political persecution and barbaric repression of political opponents and human rights defenders.

Parliament urges EU member states to demand the end to all political persecution, as well as an independent inquiry into the death of Obama Mefuman and the wider situation of political prisoners. MEPs want the EU to sanction regime members involved in human rights violations.

Background

In 2019, Julio Obama Mefuman and other opposition members were kidnapped in South Sudan and flown to Equatorial Guinea where they were sentenced on charges of terrorism, denied consular assistance and allegedly tortured. Obama Mefuman died in prison in January 2023.

The resolution was adopted by 518 votes in favour, 6 against and 19 abstentions. For more details, full text will be available [here](#). (19.01.2023)

Eswatini: the situation of human rights defenders and the murder of Thulani Maseko

Parliament strongly condemns the killing of human rights and trade union lawyer Thulani Maseko. MEPs call for an investigation into the harassment, violence and pressure against other pro-democracy and human rights activists, as well as the alleged recruitment of mercenaries to help the country's security forces repress opposition.

MEPs call for the immediate release of all political prisoners, whose incarceration they consider a clear contravention of the [Cotonou Agreement](#). They urge the authorities to launch a comprehensive dialogue with its opponents without delay, with the aim of national reconciliation and lasting peace, under the mediation of the Southern African Development Community (SEDC). Lastly, the resolution calls on the EU to review or suspend support programs to Eswatini, if funds risk being used for activities that violate human rights.

Background

In Eswatini, the last absolute monarchy in Africa, Thulani Maseko was killed in his home just hours after King Mswati III threatened members of the country's pro-democracy movement earlier this year.

The resolution was adopted by a show of hands. For more details, full text will be available [here](#). (19.01.2023)

Further information

[Watch a video recording of the debates \(15.02.2023\)](#)

[Committee on Foreign Affairs](#)
[Subcommittee on Human Rights](#)
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