Resolution on Bahrain, in particular the case of Nabeel Rajab

2015/2758(RSP) - 09/07/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 65 votes to 2, with 21 abstentions, a resolution on Bahrain, in particular the case of Nabeel Rajab.

The resolution was tabled by the S&D, ALDE, GUE/NGL, Greens/EFA, EFDD groups.

Members recalled that Nabeel Rajab, Bahraini human rights defender and President of the Bahrain Center for Human Rights (BCHR), Deputy Secretary-General of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and member of the Advisory Committee of Human Rights Watchs Middle East Division, was sentenced to six months imprisonment simply for peacefully exercising his freedom of expression.

Nabeel Rajab has served several prison sentences as have a considerable number of human rights defenders in Bahrain.

Under these circumstances, Members called for the dropping of charges and immediate and unconditional release of all human rights defenders, political activists and other individuals detained and charged with alleged violations related to the rights of expression, including Nabeel Rajab.

Whilst welcoming the commitments by the Bahraini authorities to implement the recommendations of the Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry (BICI) from 2011 and of the UN Universal Periodic Review of Bahrain (UPR), as well as recommendations made by other UN mechanisms, Parliament urged the Bahraini government to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

It condemned the continuing use of torture and other cruel, degrading treatment and called on this country to abide by its obligations and commitments under the UN Convention against Torture.

Democratic reforms: Members noted the Bahraini Governments ongoing efforts to reform the penal code and legal procedures urged it to take all steps to guarantee an impartial and fair judicial system.

They called for the immediate ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture, the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR aiming to abolish the death penalty.

National reconciliation: Members called on the Bahraini authorities to pursue the national consensus dialogue with a view to finding lasting and inclusive national reconciliation and sustainable political solutions for the crisis. They urged the VP/HR to continue to raise the importance of reform and reconciliation in all her dealings with the Government of Bahrain and strongly encouraged the establishment of an EU-Bahrain human rights working group.

It called for a rapid collective EU effort to develop a comprehensive strategy on how the EU and the Commission can actively push for the release of the imprisoned activists and prisoners of conscience.

Lastly, they called for an EU ban on exports of tear gas and crowd control equipment until investigations are conducted into their improper use.