Resolution on executions in Iran

2008/2624(RSP) - 04/09/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate that took place on 4 September 2008, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on executions in Iraq.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, UEN, Greens /ALE and GUE/NGL groups.

According to Amnesty International, the number of executions carried out in Iran so far this year totals at least 191, while in 2007 more executions were carried out in Iran – 317 – than in any other country in the world except China, although its population is 18 times smaller than China's. The resolution notes that 29 simultaneous executions took place in Evin prison in Tehran on 27 July 2008 and that 6 juvenile offender were put to death in Iran in 2008 alone.

The Parliament strongly condemns the growing number of executions, and urges the Iranian authorities to establish a moratorium on the use of the death penalty with a view to its abolition in accordance with the resolution adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 2007.

MEPs are profoundly saddened at the recent execution of several juvenile offenders in Iran, making Iran the only country in the world where this grave and inhumane punishment is still practised in 2008. They call on the Head of the Judiciary, Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Sharoudi, to systematically commute all death penalties for juvenile offenders. They also call on the members of the Majlis (Iranian Parliament) to urgently amend legislation in order to ensure that no-one is executed for a crime committed when less than 18 years of age. The resolution also supports legislative efforts in Iran to introduce a separate legislative and court system for juvenile offenders and calls on the Commission to support the Iranian authorities in any request for international cooperation in this domain.

The Parliament strongly condemns the persecution and imprisonment of citizens in Iran who eng age in the defence of human rights and campaign against the death penalty, and are frequently charged with 'activities against national security'.

While welcoming the recent announcement of the suspension of stoning as a means of execution, MEPs express their concern that in the penal code reform proposal currently under consideration by the Majlis, stoning for certain forms of adultery is being maintained, and they call on the members of the Majlis to commit themselves to the full abolition of stoning.

Lastly, the Parliament calls for the presentation of a resolution, at the next UN General Assembly, with a request to all countries who retain the death penalty to make available to the UN Secretary General and to public opinion all information on capital punishment and executions. The new resolution should provide for the creation of a Special Envoy of the Secretary General, with the task of monitoring the situation, ensuring maximum transparency in the capital punishment system and favouring an internal process directed to the implementation of the United Nations resolution on the moratorium on executions.