Resolution on Iran: the case of Roxana Saberi

2009/2603(RSP) - 07/05/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 5 May 2009, the European Parliament adopted by 44 votes to 0 with 1 abstention a resolution on Iran: the case of Roxana Saberi.

The resolution had been tabled by the EPP-ED, PES, GUE/NGL, Greens/ALE and ALDE groups.

Parliament recalls that on 18 April 2009 the Iranian Revolutionary Court pronounced an eight-year prison sentence against Roxana Saberi, an American-Iranian journalist, who worked for a number of organisations, including ABC radio, the BBC, the South African Broadcasting Corporation and NPR, for espionage.

Parliament condemns the unfounded sentence pronounced by the Iranian Revolutionary Court against Roxana Saberi. It expresses its deep concern at her deteriorating health condition, noting that Roxana Saberi went on a hunger strike,and was admitted to the Evin prison hospital on 1 May 2009, reportedly in a very frail condition. Parliament urges the Appeals Court, at its hearing of 12 May 2009 , to release her immediately and unconditionally on the grounds that the trial was held in camera without due legal process, in accordance with international norms, and to drop all charges against her.

Members are shocked by the unfair trial and execution of Dilara Darabi and are appalled at the continued executions of juvenile offenders in disregard of international law and despite assurances by the Iranian authorities that Iran has halted this inhumane practice. They call on the Iranian authorities to honour their commitment to halt executions of juvenile offenders.

Parliament goes on to condemn the bail system practised by the Iranian authorities in an attempt to suppress all public statements by critical citizens or peaceful reform movements, and calls for the immediate release of Maryam Malek, a member of the 'One Million Signatures' Campaign for Equality, who was arrested on 25 April 2009, as were numerous members of the Campaign before her. Her family is unable to pay the bail for her release, which has been set at 200 million rials (over EUR 10 000).

Parliament recalls that numerous labour rights activists, including Mansour Osanloo, Ebrahim Maddadi, Farzad Kamangar and Ghaleb Hosseini, remain incarcerated solely on the grounds of their commitment to fair labour practices, and reiterates its call for their immediate release. It urges the Iranian authorities to comply with all international human rights instruments ratified by Iran, especially the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both of which guarantee the right to a fair trial. In this context Parliament insists that the Iranian authorities **urgently abolish the practice of stoning**. It condemns strongly the recent execution by stoning of Vali Azad, and expresses great concern over the pending execution of Mohammad Ali Navid Khamami and Ashraf Kalhori.

It calls on the Council Presidency and the Member States" diplomatic representatives in Iran to take urgent concerted action with regard to all these cases.

Lastly, Parliament reiterates its request to the Council and the Commission to continue their examination of the human rights situation in Iran and to submit to it a comprehensive report on the matter in the first half of 2009.