Resolution on Iran

2009/2733(RSP) - 22/10/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Iran.

The resolution had been tabled by the EPP, ECR, ALDE, S&D, EFD GUE/NGL, Greens/ALE groups.

Following the elections which took place on 12 June 2009, Parliament expresses **serious doubts concerning the accuracy of the election results** which have led to the confirmation of President Mahmoud Ahmedinejad for a second term of office, despite strong indications of large-scale electoral fraud. It considers that the credibility of the Iranian President has been seriously undermined. Members pay tribute to the courage of all those Iranian men and women who are defending their basic freedoms and democratic principles and expressing their wish to live in a society free from repression and intimidation. They pay a special tribute to the Iranian women who played a crucial role in the post-election demonstrations in June, and in particular to Neda Agha Soltan, who has become the symbol of the violent repression, and also to Shadi Sadr, the human rights activist, arrested on 15 July 2009 for speaking publicly about human rights violations carried out in prisons.

Parliament condemns the large-scale and excessive use of force, arbitrary arrest and alleged torture in the repression of protests over the disputed Iranian presidential elections. It calls on the Iranian government to respect fundamental civil and political rights and in particular the right to free expression, and demands that all peaceful demonstrators and all those arrested in the wider context of the recent unrest - be they students, academics, campaigners, journalists or human rights activists - be released unconditionally. It notes that the violent repression of political opponents, human rights activists, journalists, bloggers, teachers, intellectuals, academics, gay people, women, students, trade unionists and members of religious, ethnic and language minorities has increased, and deplores the systematic restriction of freedom of information by means of blocking websites, banning them from covering unauthorized demonstrations, and implementing new restrictions requiring journalists to obtain permission before covering any story.

Accordingly, the resolution recommends that a **Special Envoy** be dispatched by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to monitor the situation of political detainees and ensure that the Iranian authorities adhere to international procedural standards and to their legal human rights obligations. It calls on the Commission to **establish an EU delegation in Tehran** in order to promote and strengthen dialogue with the authorities and with civil society in Iran, and to intensify cooperation, notably on aid for refugees and the fight against drug trafficking.

Parliament calls on the Iranian authorities:

- to grant access for the International Committee of the Red Cross to all prisoners without exception, and to allow international human rights organisations to monitor the situation in the country;
- to eliminate, in law and in practice, all forms of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and to and end impunity for human rights violations;
- to live up to the government's obligation to respect religious minorities and promptly release the seven leaders of the Baha'i faith who continue to be imprisoned, being held solely on the basis of their religious beliefs;
- to abolish the death penalty completely and, in the meantime, to establish a moratorium on executions, as called for by UN General Assembly Resolutions, in view of the fact that Iran is the country with the highest number of executions after China, the numbers having increased fourfold since President Ahmedinejad came to power in 2005. Iran holds the sad distinction of being the only

country in the world still to execute juvenile offenders with at least 140 child offenders are on death row in Iran;

- to stop the prosecution of journalists working for international media. Parliament calls, in particular, for the immediate release of Fariba Pajooh, a young Iranian-Canadian journalist and well-known blogger, arrested at her home in Tehran on 24 August 2009.

Members strongly condemn the death sentences and executions in Iran, in particular those imposed on juvenile offenders. They also condemn the suicide bomb attack which took place in Sistan-Baluchestan province on 17 October 2009, in which dozens of people were killed or wounded, being concerned that this suicide attack may be linked to the repression of ethnic and religious minorities in this province. Parliament rejects the use of terrorism as a means of resolving political disputes.