Resolution on the situation in Egypt

2011/2555(RSP) - 31/01/2011

The Council discussed the situation in Egypt and Tunisia and adopted the following conclusions:

1. Egypt: the Council recognizes the legitimate democratic aspirations and grievances of the Egyptian population. The Council states that these should be listened to carefully and addressed through urgent, concrete and decisive measures. It deeply regrets the considerable loss of life during demonstrations in Egypt over the last few days. The Council calls on all parties to show **restraint and avoid further violence**. It urges the Egyptian authorities to immediately release all peaceful demonstrators who have been detained. The Council also calls upon the Egyptian authorities to restore all communication networks without delay and to guarantee unhindered access to all media, including the Internet.

The Egyptian authorities are urged to:

- respect and protect human rights including freedom of assembly and freedom of expression and to take appropriate measures to assure the security of all citizens and their property and to protect the cultural heritage;

- seek a peaceful and constructive way forward based on a serious and open dialogue with all political forces ready to abide by democratic norms and with civil society;

- embark on an orderly transition through a broad-based government leading to a genuine process of substantial democratic reform with full respect for the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, paving the way for free and fair elections.

The Council reiterates its support for a **democratic, pluralist and stable Egypt as a key partner of the EU**, mindful of its important regional role, and sharing the goal of building stability, peace and prosperity in the Mediterranean and Middle East region. Lastly, it states that the EU is committed to accompanying the Egyptian transformation process by mobilising, reviewing and adapting existing instruments to support political, economic and social reforms.

2) Tunisia: congratulating the courage and determination of the Tunisian people and their peaceful struggle for their rights and democratic aspirations, the Council deplores the violence of repression and loss of life during recent events. It reaffirms its full solidarity with Tunisia for the establishment of a stable democracy, the rule of law and democratic pluralism in full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It states that the partnership between Tunisia and the European Union should be strengthened.

The Council also welcomes:

- commitments made by the transitional government on the release of political prisoners, the legalisation of democratic political parties and associations, and open up the sphere of civil society and the media;

- the decision to hold, as soon as possible, presidential and free legislative elections (the EU is ready in this context, to provide political support and legal assistance, technical and material to the preparation and organisation the election process);

- the decision to shed light on the facts of violence that occurred during the protests and on corruption.

The Council also adopted conclusions stating the **EU's readiness to mobilise all its instruments in support of the democratic transition in Tunisia**, including assistance for holding elections. This issue of updating and reinforcing its strategy and assistance for Tunisia under the European Neighbourhood Policy in order to reflect the new situation and the aspirations of the Tunisian people was discussed. The Council adopted targeted restrictive measures, in consultation with the Tunisian authorities, against individuals responsible for diverting public funds.