Resolution on the situation in Egypt

2011/2555(RSP) - 17/02/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 2 February 2011, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in Egypt.

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

It expresses its solidarity with the Egyptian people, applauds their courage and determination, with special regard to the young generation, and strongly supports their legitimate democratic aspirations. Members consider that the standing down of President Hosni Mubarak has opened up a **new phase in the political transition in Egypt**, and they call for a genuine national political dialogue to be launched immediately with the participation of all key political and civil-society actors. The aim should be to pave the way for lifting the state of emergency, revision of the Constitution and the electoral law, free and fair elections, a democratically elected civilian government and genuine democracy in Egypt.

Parliament calls on the Egyptian armed forces to play a constructive role in avoiding further violence and to facilitate the political process. It takes note of the decisions of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to suspend the Constitution, dissolve the parliament, establish a committee, which must include independent members, to amend articles of the Constitution, hold a popular referendum on these amendments, and hold parliamentary and presidential elections. **All political and civil-society actors should be involved** in order to reach a national consensus. Members stress the importance of **considerably accelerating economic and social reforms in Egypt,** as freedom, economic development and a higher standard of living are essential for political and social stability in the country.

The EU and its Member States are called upon to **support actively a rapid transition towards a peaceful, pluralist and just Egypt** and help democratic political forces and civil-society organisations in Egypt to organise themselves in order to be able to participate fully in the transition to democracy. Egyptian authorities are asked to ensure that Coptic Christian communities do not fall victim to current events and that all religious communities can live in peace and freely express their beliefs throughout the country. Parliament calls on the **High Representative to promote the setting-up of a task force involving the European Parliament** which can meet the need for support for the democratic transition process as expressed by those working for democratic change, in particular as regards free and democratic elections and institution-building, including developing an independent judiciary. It calls on the High Representative to support the democratic transformation also by sending an electoral observation mission to forthcoming elections;

Parliament emphasises in its resolution that events in Egypt, and in other countries in the region, highlight again the urgent need to develop more ambitious and efficient policies and instruments as well as to strengthen their budgetary background to encourage and support political, economic and social reforms in the EU's southern neighbourhood. It states that the quest for stability has often overshadowed the values of democracy, social justice and human rights in the EU's and its Member States' relations with southern neighbours in the past years. Human rights clauses in Association Agreements should be systematically backed up by a mechanism to implement those clauses; having regard in this context to the ongoing and necessary review of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). The Strategic Review of the ENP must reflect current developments in the region and must come up with new improved ways to meet the needs and aspirations of the peoples. Members insist that the review of the ENP must prioritise criteria relating to the independence of the judiciary, respect for fundamental freedoms, pluralism and freedom of the

press, and the fight against corruption, and they call on the Council to define a set of political criteria that ENP countries must fulfil in order to be granted ‘advanced status’. The current Action Plans must be radically revised with the inclusion of clear priorities accompanied by incentives for political reforms.

Furthermore, Members reiterate their demand for the EU to revise its democracy and human rights support policy so as to **create an implementation mechanism for the human rights clause in all agreements with third countries**. They call for **strengthening of the crucial EU financial instruments** for external action for the region, notably the ENPI, the EIDHR and the Stability Instrument, in order to enable them to be used effectively in these exceptional circumstances. Parliament underlines that democratic scrutiny of these financial instruments by the European Parliament must be ensured.

It goes on to state that the **Union for the Mediterranean**, which was supposed to enhance the EU's policy in the region, proved ineffective to counter the growing mistrust and meet the basic needs of the people concerned. The resolution calls on the Union for the Mediterranean to act on recent events in order to put forward proposals on how to best promote democracy and human rights in its Member States and in the region and on possible reforms in order to make its own role stronger and more efficient. Parliament calls on the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation to play an urgent and active role in mobilising the civil society of the Euro-Med region for the promotion of citizenship and participation.

Members move on to recognise the crucial role of Egypt in the Arab world and in the **Middle East Peace Process** and the importance of the Peace Agreement with Israel. They call on Egypt to remain committed to playing an active and constructive role to find lasting peace in the Middle East with a particular focus on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Palestinian reconciliation, and call for the Egypt-Israel peace treaty to be maintained.

Lastly, Parliament welcomes Council Implementing Decision 2011/79/CFSP and Council Regulation (EU) No 101/2011 imposing the freezing of assets owned or controlled by persons deemed to be responsible for the misappropriation of state funds in Tunisia and persons associated with them and calls on the Council to adopt the same measures as regards all responsible persons in Egypt.