Resolution on Egypt: recent developments

2012/2541(RSP) - 16/02/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on recent developments in Egypt.

The resolution was tabled by the S&D, EPP, ECR, Greens/EFA, EFD and ALDE groups.

Parliament expresses its solidarity with the Egyptian people in this crucial period of democratic transition in the country. It stresses the importance of holding free, fair and transparent elections, and encourages the EU and its Member States to continue supporting and assisting the Egyptian authorities, political parties and civil society in their efforts to achieve this goal. Members **call on the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) to allow independent observers to monitor the forthcoming presidential elections.** They call on the VP/HR to promote the setting-up of a **task force involving the European Parliament** to support the democratic transition process, in particular as regards the holding of free and democratic elections and institution-building, including the development of an independent judiciary.

Parliament notes that the **situation of NGOs in Egypt is alarming** and that the offices of 10 foreign-funded organisations were searched and those organisations were investigated and then banned by the (SCAF) on 29 December 2011. It calls for the criminal charges against the NGOs and political foundations to be dropped immediately. The NGOs also stand accused of establishing and running offices in Egypt without government authorisation, even though applications for registration made by the organisations in accordance with the relevant rules have not been acted on by the Egyptian authorities for over five years. These charges are the culmination of an escalating legal crackdown on national and international NGOs in Egypt.

The Egyptian authorities are asked to ensure that any inspections of domestic or foreign civil society organisations are carried out on the basis of full transparency and impartiality, and in keeping with appropriate legal procedures and international standards in the area of human rights and fundamental freedoms. SCAF's tactics constitute a severe violation of the right to freedom of association, as provided for in Article 22 of the ICCPR. Members want the Egyptian authorities to adopt a **new law on association** based on international human rights standards, in close consultation with NGOs and human rights and pro-democracy groups. They express full support for the commitment shown and the important and high-quality work carried out by these organisations in support of civil society and the Egyptian people in order to promote peace, democracy and human rights.

The resolution goes on to **deplore the considerable loss of life and the high number of injuries in Port Said** where at least 74 people were killed after clashes broke out at a football match between Cairo club Al Ahly and local club Al Masr. Parliament is concerned at accusations that the clashes were politically motivated, and calls on the Egyptian authorities urgently to initiate an independent investigation of the events of 1 February 2012.

Lastly, Parliament expresses its strong support for reforms leading to the establishment of democracy, the rule of law and social justice in Egypt, in keeping with the will of the Egyptian people. It reiterates its call for the total lifting of the state of emergency and stresses once again the importance of good governance, the fight against corruption, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Egypt. Members stress once again the need for supreme power to be transferred to a democratically elected civilian government as soon as possible.