# Resolution on the 22nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council

2013/2533(RSP) - 07/02/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the 22nd session of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

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

It takes note of the ongoing process of confirming EU priorities for the 22nd session.

**The work of the UN Human Rights Council**: Members note that 18 new members were elected to the UNHRC in 2012 but they are critical of the following:

- the arranging of uncontested elections by regional groups;
- the phenomenon of 'bloc politics' and its effect on the credibility of the UNHRC and the effectiveness of its work;
- the authorities of Kazakhstan, a newly elected member of the UNHRC, for not allowing an independent international investigation into the events in Zhanaozen;

Parliament calls for the **EU to adopt a leadership role** in ensuring the effective functioning of the treaty body system, including with regard to adequate funding.

**Arab Spring countries**: Parliament condemns the indiscriminate violence used by the Assad regime against the Syrian population, calling for **assistance to the countries in the region** in view of the effects of the Syrian crisis on security and stability. The EEAS and the Member States must ensure that the situation in Syria continues to be treated with the highest priority within UNHCR, regretting also that agreement has not yet been reached on the adoption of a resolution in the UN Security Council.

The resolution expresses concern about **human rights violations** in Libya, the United Arab Emirates, (a newly elected member of the Human Rights Council and one of the 14 states to have their human rights records reviewed by the Universal Periodic Review Working Group session), Bahrain, the Western Sahara and the political instability and resurgence of violence in Egypt.

**Other issues:** Members call for the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteurs on Iran and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

On Burma, they express grave concern about the heavy civilian casualties resulting from the military operations in Kashin State as well as the upsurge in communal violence in Rakhine State, stating that the underlying cause of the situation lies in the **long-standing discriminatory policies against the Rohingya and Kashin populations.**

Parliament expresses concern about the situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic, and in Israel and Gaza. It also condemns executions carried out in certain countries and reaffirms its strong stance against the **death penalty.** It stresses the importance of the **Universal Periodic Review** (UPR) exercise and recommends including the UPR recommendations systematically in the EU's human rights dialogues and in EU human rights country strategies, as well as in Parliamentary delegation visits to third countries.

**Special Procedures**: the resolution condemns all forms of reprisal against persons who cooperate with the UPR process and the Special Procedures.

**EU involvement**: Parliament stresses the importance of:

- integrating the work being done in the context of the UNHRC into the relevant internal and external activities of the EU, including those of Parliament;
- the establishment of the position of the EU Special Representative for Human Rights (EUSR);
- continuing to enhance cooperation between Member States in order to reach **common ground** on human rights issues. Members want more ambitious action instead of accepting the **lowest common denominator**;
- EU Member States working towards the fulfilment of the **indivisibility and universality of human rights**;
- ensuring that **sufficient funding** is provided to keep the OHCHR regional offices open;
- protecting human rights defenders under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights;
- the establishment in 2012 of the Brussels-based Council Working Party on Human Rights;
- highlighting in the UNHRC the worrisome issue of the **shrinking NGO space** in a number of countries around the world;
- drawing attention to new reports of EU companies being complicit in human rights abuses in third countries. Parliament calls for effective measures to ensure **corporate accountability for human rights violations.**