Resolution on the situation in the Maldives

2015/3017(RSP) - 17/12/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 563 votes to 31, with 32 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in the Maldives.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, GUE/NGL, Green/EFA and EFDD groups.

Parliament recalled that on 4 November 2015, the Government of the Maldives declared a state of emergency, revoked six days later, which appeared to be a means of preventing mass antigovernment protests. It also recalled that the presidential election process in 2013, which brought Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom to power, was marred by irregularities and that on 13 March 2015 Mohamed Nasheed, the first democratically elected president of the Maldives, was sentenced to 13 years in prison on politically motivated charges, as well as other former officials of his government.

Deploring the crackdown on political opponents, the Government of the Maldives is called upon to release, immediately and unconditionally, former president Mohamed Nasheed and other political prisoners. It reiterated its gross dissatisfaction with the serious irregularities in the trial of former president Mohamed Nasheed and called on the Maldivian Government to **guarantee full impartiality of the judiciary and to respect due process of law** and the right to a fair, impartial and independent trial; stresses the need to depoliticise the country's judiciary and security services.

Deeply worried by the constant erosion of human rights, including the misuse of the state of emergency by executive powers in the Maldives, Parliament called for the establishment of a genuine dialogue among all political parties on the future of this fragile island state.

The Government of the Maldives is invited to:

- respect and fully support the right to protest and the right to freedom of expression, association and assembly;
- end impunity for vigilantes who have used violence against people promoting religious tolerance, peaceful protesters, critical media and civil society; calls on the Maldives to respect fully its international obligations;
- safeguard the rights of pro-democracy campaigners, moderate Muslims, supporters of secularism, and those who oppose the promotion of Wahhabi-Salafist ideology in the Maldives.

Regression of citizens' rights: Parliament recalled that media freedom is the cornerstone of a functioning democracy. It called on the Maldivian Government and authorities to ensure adequate protection of journalists and human rights defenders who face threats and attacks on account of their legitimate work. It called, as a matter of urgency, for the **re-establishment of the moratorium on the death penalty** with a view to its abolition, and for a revision of the penal code with the aim of stopping the use of corporal punishment.

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Parliament also called on the Commission and the Member States to issue comprehensive warnings about the Maldives' human rights record to tourists planning to go to the country.

Lastly, the EU and the Member States are called upon, in the face of continuing democratic backsliding and deterioration of the human rights situation in the Maldives, to introduce restrictive measures in the form of **targeted sanctions** to freeze the assets abroad of certain members of the Maldivian Government and their leading supporters in the Maldivian business community, and to impose travel bans on them.