Resolution on the situation in Nicaragua

2018/2711(RSP) - 31/05/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution by 536 votes to 39 with 53 abstentions on the situation in Nicaragua.

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

Parliament condemned the **brutal repression and intimidation of peaceful protestors** in Nicaragua, noting that at least 84 people have been killed, more than 860 injured and over 400 arrested as a result of the peaceful student-led protests that started on 18 April 2018 as opposition to the **social security reforms** announced by President Daniel Ortega. It also condemned the **disappearances and arbitrary arrests** perpetrated by the Nicaraguan authorities, armed forces, police and violent groups supporting the government. The Nicaraguan authorities were called upon to immediately allow an international, independent and transparent **investigation** in order to prosecute those responsible for the repression and deaths during the protests.

Noting that the state of Nicaragua has seen a decline in democracy and the rule of law in the past decade, Members called for **electoral reform** resulting in fair, transparent and credible elections that respect international standards, as the way to resolve the political crisis. They remarked that Mr Ortega has been elected three times in succession, and denounced the illegal steps taken in violation of the judicial system which have led to constitutional changes removing presidential term limits and so allowed the continuous presidency of Mr Ortega, in **clear breach of the right to democratic elections**. They also noted the prevalence of public sector **corruption,** including corruption involving relatives of Mr Ortega, as well as their concern about the **links** between President Ortega and other conflicts in the region.

Parliament pointed out that, in the light of the **Association Agreement** between the European Union and the countries of Central America, Nicaragua must be reminded of the need to respect the principles of the rule of law, democracy and human rights, as set out in the agreement’s human rights clause. It urged the EU to monitor the situation and, if necessary, **assess the potential measures to be taken**. It also warned against the serious political, economic and investment consequences that might follow the breaches of human rights.

The resolution urged the Nicaraguan authorities to set the stage for all opposing sides to discuss the situation in Nicaragua and uphold the human rights situation in the country, recalling that **full participation of the opposition**, the depolarisation of the judiciary, the end of impunity and the plurality of the media are essential factors in restoring democratic order to the country.

Members went on to call on the government to **restore full media freedom** and freedom of speech in the country and to put a stop to its harassment of journalists, and stated that the seizure of media outlets by the authorities during the protests is unacceptable.

Lastly, Parliament stressed the need for the authorities to **fight the rampant corruption** within Nicaragua’ s political circles, and called for the implementation of Nicaragua’s anti-corruption legislation, including that on bribery, abuse of office and facilitation payments. The Nicaraguan authorities must sign and ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.