

Resolution on Cuba, the case of Jose Daniel Ferrer

2019/2929(RSP) - 28/11/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 382 votes to 243, with 42 abstentions, a resolution on Cuba, the case of José Daniel Ferrer.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, Renew and ECR groups.

Parliament condemned the arbitrary detention since 1 October 2019 of José Daniel Ferrer, leader of the opposition at the head of the Patriotic Union of Cuba (UNPACU). It called on the Cuban authorities to proceed with his immediate release and to allow him to consult the lawyer of his choice, to have contact with his family and to have access to all documents relating to his detention and the alleged grounds for it. It also denounced the torture and ill-treatment of Mr Ferrer.

Members reiterated their concern at the persecution, harassment and constant attacks on peaceful dissidents, independent journalists, human rights defenders and the political opposition in Cuba, calling for better guarantees for the right to a fair trial and the independence of the judiciary.

Parliament called on Cuban government to:

- implement legal reforms in order to guarantee freedom of the press, association and demonstration, and initiate political reforms enabling free, fair and democratic elections that take account of the sovereign and freely expressed will of the Cuban people;
- align its human rights policy with the international standards defined in the charters, declarations and international instruments to which Cuba is a signatory;
- allow civil society and opposition political actors to actively participate in political and social life, with no restrictions;
- allow independent domestic and international human rights monitors to have unhindered access to Cuba to extend invitations to the UN Special Rapporteurs on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, of expression and on the situation of human rights defenders;
- guarantee freedom of the press and association and to put an end to the harassment and detention of independent journalists and to stop imposing online censorship and to stop blocking websites and restricting access to information;
- abolish the death penalty for all crimes and review all death sentences to ensure that these trials comply with international standards.

Parliament recalled that the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement includes a suspension clause which should apply in the event of a violation of human rights provisions. It therefore insisted that the European Union closely monitor and supervise respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cuba when implementing the Agreement and submit regular reports relating thereto to Parliament.

Members called on the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission to actively support civil society groups and individuals defending human rights in Cuba. They called on the new VP/HR to

recognise the existence of political opposition to the Cuban Government and to support its inclusion in the political dialogue between the EU and Cuba. They also demanded that the Cuban authorities launch reforms leading to a democratic transformation of the country.