Resolution on the violent crackdown on the recent protests in Iran

2019/2993(RSP) - 19/12/2019 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the violent crackdown on the recent protests in Iran.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA and ECR groups.

Tens of thousands of people from all over Iran and representing all segments of society have exercised their fundamental right to freedom of assembly and expressed their economic grievances over the increase in fuel prices of at least 50 % in the largest scale unrest in 40 years.

Despite repeated international calls for restraint, the Iranian security forces used disproportionate means and force against protesters. According to civil society reports, Iranian security forces opened fire on unarmed protesters who did not pose any imminent risk, and allegedly shot to kill. According to reports, at least 304 people have been killed, including children, with many more wounded, and whereas thousands of protesters, as well as journalists, human rights defenders and students, have been arrested.

The Iranian authorities have not announced the official death toll and have refused to release the bodies of the victims to their families.

On 16 November 2019, the Iranian authorities implemented a five-day-long near-total shutdown of Internet communications, cutting almost all means of online communication for people inside Iran and preventing any flow of information in relation to the brutal crackdown. Shutting down internet communications is a violation of the fundamental right to access information, constituting a disproportionate limitation to freedom of expression, and has become an ongoing modus operandi for the authorities.

Parliament deplored the widespread and disproportionate use of force by Iran against non-violent protesters who were merely exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. It urged the Iranian authorities to:

- announce the total number of deaths and detainees, conduct a prompt, impartial, independent and transparent investigation into allegations of excessive use of force, including direct targeting of protestors by security forces, and hold all perpetrators of violence accountable;
- unconditionally free all protestors, human rights defenders and journalists currently held under arrest in Iran for exercising their legitimate rights to freedom of expression and assembly;
- lift all online based communications and services blockages.

Parliament reiterated its full support for Sakharov Prize laureates Nasrin Sotoudeh and Jafar Panahi and deplored the fact that Nasrin Sotoudeh is still imprisoned, serving a sentence of 33 years and 148 lashes. It insisted on her immediate and unconditional release. It also called for the travel ban which has been placed on Jafar Panahi since 2010 to be lifted.