Resolution on the human rights and political situation in Cuba

2021/2745(RSP) - 10/06/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 386 to 236, with 59 abstentions, a resolution on the human rights and political situation in Cuba.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled as a joint report by the EPP, Renew and ECR.

Lack of progress

Since the entry into force of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement almost four years ago, there has been no concrete progress in Cuba vis-à-vis the general principles and objectives pursued by the agreement towards improving the situation of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and economic and social conditions for Cuban citizens. On the contrary, the Cuban regime has increased its repression and human rights violations and **the situation has continued to deteriorate** throughout Cuban society, producing new waves of resistance and peaceful demonstrations from significant sectors that have been repressed and brutally crushed by the Cuban regime's repressive structures.

The resolution called for **compliance with the binding obligations** set out in this agreement and called for clear benchmarks be adopted in this respect.

Parliament strongly condemned the existence of political prisoners, the persistent and permanent political persecution, acts of harassment and arbitrary detentions of dissidents in Cuba. It also condemned the current attacks against artists of the San Isidro Movement, peaceful dissidents, independent journalists, human rights defenders and members of the political opposition.

Parliament called for an **immediate end** to these actions and urged the Cuban authorities immediately to **release all political prisoners** and those arbitrarily detained solely on the grounds of exercising their freedom of expression and assembly.

Moreover, Parliament deeply regretted the lack of commitment and willingness of the Cuban regime to endeavour to advance towards even minimal progress towards change or to open channels that could allow for ways to reform the regime, which would improve social and political participation as well as the living conditions of citizens.

The Cuban Government is called on to:

- implement legal reforms in order to guarantee freedom of the press, association and demonstration, and launch the political reforms enabling free, fair and democratic elections;

- align its human rights policy with the international standards defined in the charters, declarations and international instruments to which Cuba is a signatory and to allow civil society and political opposition to actively participate in political and social life with no restrictions;

- recognise independent journalism as a legitimate practice and to respect the rights of independent journalists in Cuba;

- ensure the right of Cubans to exit and return to their country, including for doctors deployed in medical missions abroad, in line with international human rights standards.

The resolution called on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to **acknowledge the existence of political opposition** to the Cuban Government, and therefore to include it in the institutionalised, formal, open and public political dialogues between the EU and Cuba, upholding the pillars of the PDCA. The VP/HR and the EEAS are called on to refuse to participate in future political and human rights dialogues with Cuba unless civil society is adequately represented.

The European Union should closely follow and monitor respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Cuba when implementing the PDCA, and submit regular reports relating thereto to Parliament.

Lastly, Parliament deeply regretted the Cuban authorities' refusal to allow European Parliament delegations to visit Cuba. It called on the authorities to permit entry to the country as soon as the sanitary conditions allows.