Resolution on the government crackdown on protests and citizens in Cuba

2021/2872(RSP) - 16/09/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 426 votes to 146, with 115 abstentions, a resolution on the government crackdown on protests and citizens in Cuba.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, Renew and ECR groups.

Parliament condemned in the strongest possible terms the extreme violence against and repression of protesters, human rights defenders, independent journalists, artists, dissidents and opposition political leaders by the Cuban government in the aftermath of the large-scale protests on 11 July this year. These demonstrations saw thousands of Cubans take to the streets in over 40 towns to peacefully protest against the chronic shortage of medicines and other essential goods, the general mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic and the systematic restrictions on human rights in the country. The Cuban authorities responded with extreme violence and repression against protestors and human rights defenders which Parliament condemned in the strongest possible terms.

The Cuban authorities are called on to:

- cease repression, release all political prisoners, prisoners of conscience and those arbitrarily detained solely on the grounds of peacefully expressing their freedom of expression and assembly, and guarantee due process;

- comply with the recommendations of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to engage in constructive dialogue with genuine civil society.

Furthermore, Parliament deplored the fact that the Cuban authorities have used the wave of detentions in the wake of the 11 July 2021 protests to criminalise the legitimate and peaceful democratic demands of its population, claw back control, re-establish a culture of fear among its population and silence some of the country’s most charismatic opponents.

Parliament regretted that, despite the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA), the situation of democracy has not improved and the deterioration of the human rights situation in Cuba has only worsened. It stressed that Cuba has been systematically violating the fundamental provisions of this agreement since its entry into force. It deeply regretted the lack of commitment and willingness of the Cuban regime to endeavour to advance towards even minimal progress for change or open channels that could allow for the regime to be reformed.

Lastly, recalling that the PDCA contains a human rights clause which allows the agreement to be suspended in the event of violations of human rights provisions, Parliament called on the EU to trigger Article 85(3b) to call an immediate meeting of the joint committee in the light of the breaches of the agreement on the part of the Cuban Government, which constitutes a ‘case of special urgency’.