Resolution on the case of human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor in the United Arab Emirates

2021/2873(RSP) - 16/09/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 383 votes to 47, with 259 abstentions, a resolution on the case of human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor in the United Arab Emirates.

On 29 May 2018, after a grossly unfair trial, Ahmed Mansoor was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison by the Court of Appeal in Abu Dhabi on charges related to his human rights advocacy. He was also fined one million UAE dirhams (EUR 232 475) and will be placed under surveillance for three years upon his release. The charges against him are based on alleged violations of the UAE's 2012 Cybercrime Law. According to both the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and Human Rights Watch, he was convicted solely for his human rights advocacy, including tweeting about injustices in his country, taking part in webinars on human rights and sending messages to human rights non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The UAE authorities have violated Ahmed Mansoor's rights for more than 10 years with arbitrary arrest and detention, death threats, physical assault, government surveillance and inhumane treatment in custody.

Parliament strongly condemned the detention of Ahmed Mansoor and all other human rights defenders in the UAE, who have been imprisoned solely for exercising their basic human rights, including their rights to freedom of speech, association, peaceful assembly and expression both online and offline, which are enshrined not only in universal human rights instruments, but also in the Arab Charter on Human Rights. It called for the **immediate and unconditional release** of Ahmed Mansoor, Mohammed al-Roken and Nasser bin Ghaith, as well as all other human rights defenders, political activists and peaceful dissidents.

The UAE are urged to:

- ensure that Ahmed Mansoor and all other prisoners are treated in line with the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners;

- remove Mansoor from solitary confinement, and that all prisoners be allowed regular lawyer and family visits and be provided with adequate medical care;

- guarantee all detainees, including prisoners of conscience, due process and fair trial;

- stop the harassment of and immediately lift the travel ban against human rights defenders.

The EEAS is called on to propose the adoption of EU targeted measures against those responsible for grave human rights violations in the UAE, including the persecution of Ahmed Mansoor and other human rights defenders, under the EU global human rights

sanctions regime. For its part, the EU should adopt and make public meaningful human rights benchmarks and a list of individual cases for its human rights dialogue with the UAE, with a view to enabling a genuine and results-oriented discussion on human rights.

The resolution recalled that in 2015 the EU signed a short-stay visa waiver agreement with the UAE. The Commission is called on to report to Parliament on the compliance of this agreement with the relevant EU legislation, notably as regards the consideration of human rights and fundamental freedoms as a criteria for visa exemption. Parliament should be informed about the progress in this area.

In order to signal their disapproval of the human rights violations in the UAE, Parliament invited the international companies sponsoring Expo 2020 Dubai to withdraw their sponsorship and encouraged Member States not to participate in the event. It also called for the establishment of more stringent transparency rules regarding the lobbying activities of foreign organisations towards EU institutions.