Resolution on the situation in Cuba, namely the cases of José Daniel Ferrer, Lady in White Aymara Nieto, Maykel Castillo, Luis Robles, Félix Navarro, Luis Manuel Otero, Reverend Lorenzo Rosales Fajardo, Andy Dunier García and Yunior García Aguilera

2021/3019(RSP) - 16/12/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 393 votes to 15, with 119 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in Cuba, namely the cases of José Daniel Ferrer, Lady in White Aymara Nieto, Maykel Castillo, Luis Robles, Félix Navarro, Luis Manuel Otero, Reverend Lorenzo Rosales Fajardo, Andy Dunier García and Yunior García Aguilera.

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

On 11 July 2021, demonstrations took place in more than 50 cities on the island, to peacefully protest against the socio-economic crisis, the chronic shortages of medicines and other essential goods, and the systematic restrictions on human rights. These grievances, in parallel with COVID-19, have created an increase in the demands for civil and political rights, and for democracy.

The European Parliament condemns in the strongest terms the systematic abuses against protestors, political dissidents, religious leaders, human rights activists and independent artists, among others, including their arbitrary detention and abusive restrictions on their movements and communications, such as house arrests and surveillance, and torture and ill-treatment perpetrated by the Cuban Government.

The resolution called for the immediate and unconditional release of José Daniel Ferrer, Lady in White Aymara Nieto, Maykel Castillo, Luis Robles, Félix Navarro, Luis Manuel Otero, Reverend Lorenzo Rosales Fajardo and Andy Dunier García, and of all those detained for the exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

The Cuban authorities are called on to:

- drop abusive criminal charges and allow those in exile to return to their country;

- immediately put an end to the policy of repression, which maintains a culture of fear and quashes all forms of dialogue, as well as freedom of expression and assembly;

- ensure and guarantee the right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly at all times by allowing peaceful demonstrations in the country;

- ensure that the economic, social and cultural rights of the population are met, in order to address their need for greater access to food and medicines, and to provide an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

- grant access to an EU delegation and to representatives of the Member States, as well as to independent human rights organisations, to monitor the trials and conduct prison visits of the hundreds of activists and ordinary Cubans who continue to be detained for exercising their right to freedom of expression and assembly.

Parliament also regretted that despite the entry into force of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA) between the EU and Cuba in 2017, the situation of democracy and human rights in the country has not improved but has instead seriously deteriorated. It restated that, as part of the PDCA, Cuba must respect and consolidate the principles of the rule of law, democracy and human rights.

Lastly, the Council is called on to adopt sanctions against those responsible for the persistent human rights violations in Cuba.