Resolution on suspicions of corruption from Qatar and the broader need for transparency and accountability in the European institutions

2022/3012(RSP) - 15/12/2022 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 541 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions, a resolution on suspicions of corruption from Qatar and the broader need for transparency and accountability in the European institutions.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR, the Left groups and Members.

The Belgian federal prosecutor's office has opened an ongoing investigation into allegations of money-laundering, corruption and participation in a criminal organisation. Several arrests and searches have taken place since 9 December 2022, affecting both current and former Members of the European Parliament, as well as staff. Parliament welcomes the termination of Member Eva Kaili from her position as Vice-President following her alleged involvement.

Parliament is appalled by and expresses serious concern about the alleged acts of corruption, money-laundering and participation in a criminal organisation by Members, former Members and staff of the European Parliament in exchange for influence over Parliament's decisions in particular decisions adopted by committees and the plenary assembly with regard to Qatar, including the resolution on the situation of human rights in the context of the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, adopted on 24 November 2022.

It notes with concern that internal monitoring and alert mechanisms of the EU institutions have dramatically failed to detect ongoing corruption.

While denouncing Qatar's alleged attempts to influence Members through acts of corruption, the resolution calls for the setting up of a special committee tasked with identifying potential flaws in the European Parliament's rules on transparency, integrity and corruption. It also commits to setting up a committee of inquiry following the outcome of the criminal investigations and possible court proceedings.

The resolution called for:

- a thorough evaluation of and improvements to the readability of Members' legislative activities, in particular by disclosing legislative footprints for proposed texts and amendments;

- the transparency register to be made mandatory;

- transparency register to cover former Members;

- the EU institutions to urgently adopt measures to introduce the practice of minimum 'cooling-off periods' for senior EU officials and former Members, in order to avoid the phenomenon of 'revolving doors'.

Parliament commits to ensuring full transparency of Members' side income by exact amount and prohibiting any external financing of Members' and groups' staff and commits to establishing a ban at EU level on donations from third countries to Members and political parties, to close loopholes in Member States. It requests that the Commission urgently put forward a proposal on this matter.

Members urgently call for the access badges of representatives of Qatari interests to be suspended until the judicial investigations provide relevant information and clarification.

Lastly, Parliament suspends all work on legislative files relating to Qatar, particularly as regards visa liberalisation and the EU aviation agreement with Qatar, and planned visits, until the allegations have either been confirmed or dismissed.