Resolution on Egypt, in particular the sentencing of Hisham Kassem

2023/2883(RSP) - 05/10/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 379 votes to 30, with 31 abstentions, a resolution on Egypt, in particular the sentencing of Hisham Kassem.

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

Hisham Kassem is an important liberal voice in Egypt, publisher and advocate for media freedom and the rule of law.

Ahead of the December 2023 presidential election in Egypt, Mr. Kassem has played a pivotal role in founding the Free Current, a coalition of liberal opposition parties and personalities, criticising the government’s economic and political record.

The resolution called for the immediate and unconditional release of Hisham Kassem, sentenced in September to six months in prison and a fine on a charge of defamation and slander for an online post criticising former Egyptian minister Abu Eita. They urged Egyptian authorities to drop all politically motivated charges against him and called on the EU delegation and member states representatives to visit him in prison.

Members undermined the importance of holding credible, free and fair elections and urged authorities to stop harassing peaceful opposition figures such as aspiring presidential candidate and former member of parliament Ahmed El Tantawy.

The Egyptian authorities are urged to:

- uphold the rule of law, freedom of expression, press, media and association, and judicial independence;

- immediately and unconditionally release the tens of thousands of prisoners arbitrarily detained for peacefully expressing their opinion;

- lift online censorship against independent media.