Resolution on the case of Boualem Sansal in Algeria

2025/2512(RSP) - 23/01/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 533 votes to 24, with 48 abstentions, a resolution on the case of Boualem Sansal in Algeria.

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

On 16 November 2024, French-Algerian writer Boualem Sansal was arrested for taking a robust stance to Algeria's authoritarian regime and advocating for freedom of expression. His whereabouts were unknown for over a week, during which he was denied access to his family and legal counsel, violating his right to a fair trial. Charged with national security-related offences under Article 87bis of Algeria’s Penal Code - a provision often used against critics - Sansal has since been hospitalised multiple times.

Freedom of expression in Algeria has significantly deteriorated, with the country ranked 139th on the 2024 World Press Freedom Index. Journalists face increasing pressure, and at least 215 individuals are held as prisoners of opinion. Recent amendments to Algeria's Penal Code have further restricted freedoms, despite the country’s commitments under international law and its partnership with the EU, which disbursed EUR 213 million to Algeria between 2021 and 2024 under the Multiannual Indicative Programme.

Parliament condemned:

- the arrest and detention of Boualem Sansal and called for his immediate and unconditional release;

- the arrests of all other activists, political prisoners, journalists and human rights defenders and called for their release.

Moreover, the resolution urged the EU institutions and the EU Delegation to publicly share their concerns with the Algerian authorities, and to organise a medical mission to assess Sansal’s health. It called on the Algerian authorities to review all repressive laws restricting freedoms, including those in the Penal Code. It also highlighted the need to protect the freedom of the press and uphold the rule of law.

Lastly, Members stressed that the renewal of the EU-Algeria Partnership agreement must be based upon continued and substantial progress and that all future disbursements of EU funds should consider the progress made in this regard.