Resolution on the case of Ryan Cornelius in Dubai

2025/2796(RSP) - 10/07/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 511 votes to 50, with 75 abstentions, a resolution on the case of Ryan Cornelius in Dubai.

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

As a reminder, Ryan Cornelius, a 71-year-old British national married to an EU citizen, has been arbitrarily detained in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) since 2008, following a conviction on false fraud charges related to a loan from Dubai Islamic Bank (DIB) for a property development project. He is held in inhumane prison conditions, with his health deteriorating and without proper access to healthcare.

Dubai Law 37 of 2009 states in Article 7(1) that the convicted person (the debtor) shall not be sentenced to jail if that person is aged over 70. However, Ryan Cornelius turned 70 in 2024 and as such should be granted an exemption under this law.

Parliament condemned Ryan Cornelius’s arbitrary and prolonged detention and called for him and all other arbitrarily detained persons to be released immediately and unconditionally. It urged the UAE to ensure fair trials and abolish the practice of debt-related imprisonment. The resolution also pointed out that the assets seized in this particular case exceed by far the debt owed and demanded that Ryan Cornelius be granted an enforceable right to compensation and other remedies.

Lastly, the United Kingdom is called on to take all necessary action to ensure Ryan Cornelius’s release and urged the VP/HR, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the Member States and the EU Delegation to the UAE to raise his case in all bilateral engagements with the UAE and closely monitor the conditions of his detention.