

Resolution on the arbitrary arrest and torture of Belgian-Portuguese researcher Joseph Figueira Martin in the Central African Republic

2025/2797(RSP) - 10/07/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 617 votes to 4, with 18 abstentions, a resolution on the arbitrary arrest and torture of Belgian-Portuguese researcher Joseph Figueira Martin in the Central African Republic.

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

As a reminder, Joseph Figueira Martin, a dual Belgian-Portuguese citizen and humanitarian researcher, was kidnapped on 26 May 2024 in the Central African Republic (CAR) by the Wagner Group and later handed over to the CAR authorities. CAR brought charges against him based on unfounded accusations, including espionage and terrorism, for which he could face lifetime imprisonment and forced labour. He has been in detention under inhumane conditions and without trial for over a year.

Parliament strongly condemned the human rights violations committed through the arbitrary, continued and inhuman detention of Mr Martin, seriously threatening his life and health.

The CAR authorities are urged to:

- immediately and unconditionally release Mr Martin, given the absence of credible and substantiated evidence justifying his detention;
- allow his medical evacuation and ensure his access to legal representation, consular assistance and appropriate care in accordance with international human rights standards;
- ensure that the armed groups operating in CAR immediately cease illegal and arbitrary arrests and attacks on humanitarian and NGO workers;

The resolution condemned the growing politically motivated foreign interference in CAR, including through Russian paramilitary forces and disinformation campaigns. The Council is again called on to designate the Wagner Group a terrorist organisation.