Resolution on the case of Joseph Figueira Martin in the Central African Republic

2026/2572(RSP) - 22/01/2026 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 582 votes to 0, with 35 abstentions, a resolution on the case of Joseph Figueira Martin in the Central African Republic.

Joseph Figueira Martin, a dual Belgian-Portuguese citizen and humanitarian researcher working for the NGO FHI 360, was kidnapped on 26 May 2024 in the Central African Republic (CAR) by the Wagner Group while working on a development project and was later handed over to the CAR authorities. He was held in solitary confinement in a Wagner operated facility and was tortured. He remained in detention for over a year in inhumane conditions without access to medical care and without trial.

Parliament recalled that in its resolution of 10 July 2025, it demanded the immediate and unconditional release of Mr Martin and deplored the continued non-compliance of the CAR authorities, which is further aggravating his situation. It urged, once again, the CAR authorities to immediately release Mr Martin and authorise his medical evacuation, in view of the serious deterioration of his health. He should also be guaranteed legal counsel, consular assistance and family visits, in full compliance with international human rights standards.

Members called on the Commission, the VP/HR and the Council, in coordination with Belgium and Portugal, to impose targeted sanctions, including travel bans and asset freezes, on all individuals responsible for the arbitrary detention, mistreatment and conviction of Mr Martin, should the CAR authorities persist in violating his rights. The resolution called for an ad hoc mission from Parliament to the CAR to assess Mr Martin’s situation and increase the pressure for his release.

Lastly, the Council, for its part, is called on to list the Wagner Group as a terrorist organisation.