Resolution on Iran

2005/2504(RSP) - 13/01/2005 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted by 104 votes to 2 with 5 abstentions a resolution on Iran.

The resolution had been tabled on behalf of the ALDE, EPP-ED, PES, GUE/NGL, and Greens/ALE groups.

Noting multiplying reports of executions being carried out or death sentences being imposed with apparent disrespect for internationally recognised safeguards, including sentences against juvenile offenders, pregnant women and mentally handicapped persons, Parliament reiterates its general opposition to the death penalty, and in particular strongly condemns the death sentences against and/or the execution of juvenile offenders, pregnant women and mentally handicapped persons. It calls on the Iranian authorities to give evidence that they are implementing their declared moratorium on stoning, and demands the immediate implementation of the ban on torture as announced, passed by the Iranian Parliament and approved by the Guardian Council.

Parliament also notes that reports speak of arbitrary arrests of journalists, cyberjournalists and webloggers, the blocking of online publications and the threatening of those journalists who report on torture with lengthy prison sentences by the Iranian judiciary, thus cracking down on the Iranian public's only remaining means of access to uncensored information. It condemns the campaign by the judiciary against journalists, cyberjournalists and webloggers leading to the closure of publications, imprisonment, and, according to reports, widespread torture and forced false confessions. It calls on the authorities to release all those detained, prosecuted or sentenced for non-violent press- and opinion-related offences.

Members recall that the Council, on 13-14 December 2004, gave its support to a negotiating process for a long-term EU-Iran arrangement, having taken note of the International Atomic Energy Agency's confirmation of full suspension of all nuclear enrichment-related and reprocessing activities by Iran and with the aim of resuming negotiations on a trade and cooperation agreement and the provision of objective guarantees that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively for peaceful purposes.

They support the EU-Iran negotiating process on nuclear issues, as an occasion to promote progress in the EU-Iran political and human rights dialogues and EU-Iran economic and trade relations, and support the Council in expecting action by Iran to address also other concerns of the EU, such as ending its support for terrorist organisations, improving respect for human rights and altering its approach to the Middle East peace process.

Parliament calls on the Iranian Parliament to adapt the Iranian press law and penal code in the light of Iran's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and, notably, to repeal all criminal law provisions concerning the peaceful expression of opinion, including in the press. It also calls upon the authorities to respect internationally recognised legal safeguards, inter alia with regard to persons belonging to religious minorities, officially recognised or otherwise.

Lastly, it hopes that the setting-up of its interparliamentary delegation for relations with Iran will enable it to engage in productive discussions with the Iranian Parliament and also with Iranian civil society.