Resolution on human rights in Syria

2007/2565(RSP) - 24/05/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a joint resolution on Syria, and expressed its great concern at the recent verdicts handed down to political prisoners and human rights activists in Syria which affect every political trend of the opposition. It was deeply concerned at the restrictions imposed on, and the charges made against, Mahmoud Issa, Fayek El Mir, Aref Dalila, Kamal al-Labwani, Anwar Al Bunni, Michel Kilo, Suleiman Al-Shamar and Khalil Hussein for exercising their democratic rights and engaging in peaceful activities. The resolution refers briefly to the activities of each of these individuals.

It urged the Syrian authorities to comply strictly with international human rights law ratified by Syria and to respect freedom of opinion and the right to a fair trial. Parliament calls on the authorities to ensure that the detainees are well treated and not subjected to torture or other illtreatment and that detained or imprisoned persons are given prompt and regular access to their lawyers, doctors and families. In fact, the relevant Syrian bodies should reverse the judgments, drop the charges still pending in the Military Court of Damascus and release all the abovementioned prisoners of conscience and political prisoners.

More broadly, Members called for the abrogation of the state of emergency in Syria, which was established more than 40 years ago. The Community institutions should provide all necessary support to Syrian civil society activists through the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and the newly adopted European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR), including by implementing the so-called ad hoc measures dedicated to human rights defenders.

Syria could play an important role in promoting peace in the region, and Parliament asked it to improve and support human rights and freedom of expression in the country.

Lastly, Syria was asked to support the setting up of a penal tribunal of international nature once the enquiry being led by Judge Brammertz, Commissioner of the UN International Independent Investigation Commission, in Lebanon is completed.