



Plenary sitting

B9-0173/2023

14.3.2023

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on Tunisia: Recent attacks against freedom of expression and association and trade unions, in particular the case of journalist Nouredine Boutar

(2023/2588(RSP))

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

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European Parliament resolution on Tunisia: Recent attacks against freedom of expression and association and trade unions, in particular the case of journalist Nouredine Boutar

(2023/2588(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rules 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas since President Kais Saied’s self-coup in July 2021, his suspension of the democratically elected government and Parliament, he rules by decree; whereas Saied abolished the separation of powers and re-wrote the country’s constitution in a process which according to the Venice Commission did not fulfil legal preconditions; whereas only 11% of Tunisians participated in the recent parliamentary elections; whereas on 9 March 2023 Saied announced to dissolve local authorities;
 - B. whereas in February 2023, Tunisian authorities launched the most aggressive crackdown on dissent since Tunisia’s 2011 revolution, arresting critics, including director of Mosaique FM Nouredine Boutar, political activists Chaima Issa, Jaouhar Ben Mbarek, opposition politicians, and trade unionist on politically-motivated unfounded accusations; whereas Boutar was questioned about Mosaique FM’s editorial line and finally charged with money laundering and illegal enrichment;
 - C. whereas on February 21st President Saied claimed there was a plot to settle sub-Saharan African in Tunisia to change demographic composition; whereas thereafter sub-Saharan Africans across the country were arrested, violently attacked or lost their jobs; whereas in 2018 Tunisia enacted the law 50-2018 penalizing racial discrimination and enabling victims to seek redress;
1. Is deeply concerned about the human rights implications of the dismantling of Tunisia’s democracy by President Saied’s and the dramatic escalation of his dictatorial consolidation;
 2. Calls on President Saied and Tunisian authorities to respect freedom of expression and association, release those arbitrarily detained and withdraw unfounded charges; demands Tunisian authorities to respect the right of due process and fair trial, stop harassment and discrimination against journalists, lawyers, human rights defenders, trade unionists, sub-Saharan Africans, and political opponents;
 3. Calls on Tunisian authorities to act in accordance with international human rights law and its national laws, notably law 50-2018 against racial discrimination, refrain from racist incitement and smear campaigns and launch inquiries into abuses;
 4. Demands that President Saied immediately reinstate judges and prosecutors arbitrarily

dismissed and reverse all measures undermining judicial independence;

5. Calls on all EU institutions and Member States to firmly and publicly condemn the crackdown on dissent, racist attacks and hate speech and to demand the release of all those arbitrarily detained and concrete steps towards an inclusive national democratic dialogue;
6. Calls on the European Commission to suspend macro-financial assistance to the Tunisian treasury until there are tangible improvements in the respect for human rights, democracy and rule of law; ensure EU funding does not empower institutions and practices that contribute to human rights violations; review financial support and cooperation with the Tunisian judiciary and cease funding Tunisia's integrated coastal surveillance system; redirect EU funds to local NGOs and international organisations that supply direct assistance to those in need;
7. Calls on the EU delegation and Member States embassies in Tunisia to observe trials of those arbitrarily detained and visit them;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EU institutions, HRVP, the Member States, and Tunisia;