



Plenary sitting

B9-0398/2023

3.10.2023

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 Egypt, in particular the sentencing of Hisham Kassem

(2023/2883(RSP))

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

B9-0398/2023

Motion for a European Parliament resolution on Egypt, in particular the sentencing of Hisham Kassem

(2023/2883(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rules 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas on 16 September 2023 prominent opposition politician and publisher Hisham Kassem was sentenced to six month in prison for posting political messages on social media; whereas Mr Kassem is arbitrarily detained since August; whereas Mr Kassem is denied the right to a fair trial; whereas Hisham Kassem was on hunger strike from 23 August to 12 September protesting unjust imprisonment;
 - B. whereas a limited number of dissidents were released from unjust imprisonment in Egypt, the arbitrary arrests and prosecution of activists and human rights defenders and relatives continues unabated;
 - C. whereas following Egyptian politician and journalist Ahmed Tantawi's announcement to run for the Presidential elections he was surveilled by Cytrox's Predator spyware and at least 73 of his campaign workers were arrested;
1. Expresses its deep concern about the escalating human rights crisis in Egypt; condemns the arbitrary arrest and detention of Hisham Kassem and tens of thousands dissidents, journalists and human rights defenders for making use of the right to freedom of expression;
 2. Is alarmed about the very restrictive political and legal context of Egypt's electoral process, including the harsh closure of the public space and absence of a competitive environment for campaigning;
 3. Calls on the Egyptian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Hisham Kassem and to cease arbitrarily arresting, detaining or harassing dissidents via digital surveillance;
 4. Urges Egyptian authorities to stop using allegations that do not justify pre-trial detention, to target political opponents or journalists; calls on Egyptian authorities to stop using loosely worded articles to criminalise dissidents; calls on the Egyptian Parliament to remove or re-define vague laws to limit abuse;
 5. Calls on the VP/HR and EU Member States to take a firm public position regarding the human rights crisis in Egypt and use all engagement with Egypt to demand the immediate release of Mr Kassem and the detained dissidents, journalists and human rights defenders;

6. Calls on the VP/HR and Member States to apply the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions regime to high-level Egyptian officials responsible for the most serious violations;
7. Asks representatives of the EU and Member State to adopt a more critical approach towards the Egyptian government and insist on real progress in the implementation of Egypt's National Human Rights Strategy;
8. Demands a fundamental review of EU-Egypt relations; asks the European Commission to address Egypt's consistent failure to deliver on the partnership priorities from June 2022; calls on the European Commission to suspend budget support to Egypt until there are tangible human rights improvements, notably releasing arbitrarily detained dissidents;
9. Urges EU Member States to abide by the EU Council conclusions of 21 August 2013 to suspend export licences for equipment which might be used for internal repression in Egypt, in line with Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, including arms, surveillance technology and other security equipment;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EU institutions, HRVP, the Member States, and Egypt;