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[Publication](#) | 21.10.2004

Human Rights violations in Iran

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

Tabled by Angelika Beer, Monica Frassoni, Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Joost Lagendijk and Hélène Flautre on behalf of the Green/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran
- having regard to the Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression, Ambeyi Ligabo, to the Commission on Human Rights on 12 January 2004
- subscribing to the EU Council Conclusions of 11. October 2004

A. Concerned that in recent months crack downs against the freedom of the press have multiplied in Iran

B. Noting that according to the Special Rapporteur already one year ago the number of publications closed down and of people arrested, prosecuted and sentenced for the peaceful expression of their opinion had increased considerably

C. Noting that the National Security Council and the office of the public prosecutor increasingly intervene directly with the press to influence the contents of the reported news and alarmed about reports that in the provinces, journalists have been forced to report in a certain way under threat of imprisonment

D. Particularly concerned by recent arrests of on-line journalists, seven of whom remain imprisoned: Omid Memarian, Masoud Ghoreyshi, Reza Vatanikhah, Mehdi Derayati, Hanif Mazroi, Shahram Rafihi Zadeh, Rozbeh Mir Ebrahimi

E. Concerned about reports that in offence to Iranian and international law, the charges against them have still not been revealed, their place of detention continues to be unknown and they have been refused access by lawyers and family members

F. Considering that with the repression against the free use of the internet the Iranian authorities are cracking down on the only remaining access of the Iranian public to uncensored information

G. Recalling the continued imprisonment of other journalists for the mere exercise of their right to freedom of expression, notably Akbar Ganji, Hassan Yussefi Eshkevari, Hossein Ghazian, Abbas Abdi, Reza Alidjani, Taghi Rahmani, Hoda Rezazadeh-Saber, Iraj Jamshidi and Ensaf Lali Hedayat

H. Underlining the findings of the Special UN Rapporteur Mr. Ligabo that the Iranian Press Law and Penal Code do not conform to the permissible restrictions listed in article 19, §3, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)

I. Equally concerned about the fate of the imprisoned lawyer and human rights defender Nasser Zarafshan

J. Appalled about the public hanging of the 16 year-old Ateqeh Rajabi two months ago, which was the tenth execution of a child offender in Iran recorded by human rights organisations since 1990

K. Outraged by the recent condemnation of the 13-year-old child Zhila Izadi to death by stoning after being found pregnant from her 15 year-old brother, who was himself condemned to 150 lashes

1. Calls on the Iranian authorities to immediately halt all attempts of stoning and to prevent any further application of the death penalty to minors

2. Reiterates its absolute opposition to the death penalty and hopes that a judicial reform in Iran will bring this inhumane practice to an end

3. Condemns the recent arbitrary arrests of journalists and calls on the authorities to release all prisoners prosecuted or sentenced for press- and opinion-related offences

4. Calls on the Iranian Parliament to adapt the Iranian Press Law and the Penal Code to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and notably to repeal all criminal provisions dealing with the peaceful expression of one's opinion, including in the press

5. Demands that opinion-related offences should be excluded from the competence of Revolutionary Courts and that the Preventive Restraints Act, intended for serious crimes, should not apply in relation to press offences

6. Calls on the Council to present a resolution on behalf of the European Union about the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran under 'item 9' for the 60th session of the United Nations General Assembly

7. Expresses its hope that the creation of the Delegation with Iran will enable the European Parliament to engage in fruitful discussions with the Iranian Madjlis on human rights and other issues of common concern

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the High Representative for CFSP, the Government and the Parliaments of the EU Member States, the UN Commission on Human Rights, and the Government and Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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