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Situation in Egypt

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

Tabled by ***Franziska Brantner, Helene Flautre, Frieda Brepoels, Raul Romeva, Judith Sargentini, Indrek Tarand, Margrete Auken, Malika Benrarab-Attou, Bart Staes, Barbara Lochbihler, Emilie Turunen, Catherine Grèze, Michail Tremopoulos, François Alfonsi, Keith Taylor,Heidi Hautala, Eva Joly*** *and* ***Daniel Cohn-Bendit***

on behalf of the Greens/EFA group in the EP

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Egypt and in particular the one of 17 January 2008

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948

- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966

- having regard to the EU guidelines on Human Rights defenders of June 2004 and updated in 2008,

- having regard to the development of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) since 2004, and in particular to the Commission's progress reports on its implementation;

- having regard to the Euro-Mediterranean Association Agreement between the European Union and Egypt entered into force in June 2004

- having regard to the EU-Egypt ENP Action Plan approved in March 2007

- having regard to the Commission Communications of 11 March 2003 on Wider Europe - Neighbourhood: A New Framework for Relations with our Eastern and Southern Neighbours[1], of 12 May 2004 on European Neighbourhood Policy - Strategy Paper[2], of 4 December 2006 on Strengthening the ENP[3], of 5 December 2007 on A Strong European Neighbourhood Policy[4], and of 12 May 2010 on Taking Stock of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP)[5],

- having regard to joint decision of April 2009 to work towards enhancing relations between the EU and

Egypt, as proposed by Egypt in 2008

- having regard to the Council conclusions on Egypt of 31 January 2011,

- having regard to the Statements by the EU HR/VP Catherine Ashton on the situation in Egypt of 3 and 4 February 2011

- having regard to the statement by a group of United Nations independent human rights experts of 3 February 2011

- having regard to the declaration by President Van Rompuy on Egypt and the region of 4 February 2011

- having regard to the statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay on the current situation in North Africa of 4 February 2011;

- having regard to its previous resolutions of 19 January 2006 on the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), of 15 November 2007 on the Strengthening ENP, of 19 February 2009 on The Barcelona Process: Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), of 20 May 2010 on Union for the Mediterranean, of 6 July 2006 on the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and of 19 February 2009 on the Review of the ENPI,

A. Whereas the peaceful demonstrations in Egypt, and in other Arab countries, calling for political, economic and social change expressed a strong popular widespread demand for genuine democracy and an end to the authoritarian regime; whereas the ongoing events starting from Tunisia show unequivocally the desire of those people for freedom and democracy,

B. Whereas the massive demonstrations in Egypt which started on 25 January resulted in well over 300 deaths and a large number of people injured and arrested; whereas widespread protests are still going on in the squares of the main Egyptian cities; whereas the size of the demonstrations is unprecedented in the history of Egypt and the Arab world

C. Whereas the initially peaceful protests have become increasingly violent with the attacks against demonstrators by armed individuals, pro-government militias and the police firing teargas and rubber bullets and using water cannons; ; whereas the Interior Ministry decided not to provide any police services in the country following the historical demonstration of the 28th of January, leaving people in insecurity;

D. Whereas Egyptian authorities ordered telecommunication companies to shut down 60 million mobile phone lines in Egypt and cut most of Egypt's internet access, with the goal of hampering massive mobilisation and silencing citizens; whereas media and legal centres such as Al Jazeera and the Hisham Mubarak Law Center were closed by the military police;

E.. Whereas there has been an increasing number of attacks and arrests of Egyptian and international journalists and human rights defenders since the end of January, in an attempt to stem independent reporting of the continuing protest and to create an environment where human rights violations can take place undocumented and out of the sight of Egyptian and international media;

F. Whereas change in Egypt requires an immediate, serious and open dialogue with the participation of all political forces that respect democratic norms as well as the civil society, which must result in urgent, concrete and decisive measures aimed at implementing substantial democratic reforms,

G. Whereas the Euro-Mediterranean partnership was mainly focused on economic reforms and was unable

to bring about the necessary political and institutional reforms; whereas the Union for the Mediterranean, that was supposed to enhance the EU policy in the region, proved ineffective to meet the growing mistrust and the basic needs of the people concerned;

H. Whereas EU relations privileged the partnerships with the authoritarian regimes and their leaders and neglected the dialogue with civil societies and democratic forces in the Southern shore of the Mediterranean,

I. Whereas the promotion and respect of democracy, human rights and civil liberties are fundamental principles and aims of the EU and must constitute common shared values in the Euro-Mediterranean area;

J. Whereas the European Parliament has repeatedly called for the lifting of the state of emergency which is almost continuously in force since 1967, for the strengthening of democracy, and for respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Egypt;

K. Whereas the Council, in its conclusions of 31 January 2011, reiterated its support for a democratic, pluralist and stable Egypt as a key partner of the EU, mindful of its important regional role and confirmed its commitment to accompanying, through a partnership, the Egyptian transformation process by mobilising, renewing and adapting existing instruments to support political, economic and social reforms;

1. Strongly supports the legitimate democratic aspirations expressed by people in Egypt and in other Arab countries, expresses its solidarity with peaceful demonstrators and condemns in the strongest terms the violence and all those who use and encourage violence and try to destabilise the situation;

2. Deeply deplores the high number of loss of life and of injuries during demonstrations and expresses its sympathies to the families of the victims;

3. Calls for the resignation of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and considers that this act would pave the way and facilitate the transition process that should lead to the formation of an interim government involving all democratic forces and civil society actors with a view to guaranteeing urgent, concrete and decisive measures such as political, institutional and constitutional reforms, the lifting of the state emergency and the organisation of free and fair legislative and presidential elections;

4. Urges the Egyptian authorities to guarantee the exercise of the right to peaceful demonstration and to ensure that the law enforcement authorities refrain from using unnecessary excessive force against demonstrators; reminds the Egyptian authorities and security forces of their obligation to assure the security of all citizens;

5. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of opinion, peaceful demonstrators alongside with Egyptian and international human rights defenders, journalists and lawyers who have been detained in violation with Egypt's international obligations and in clear contradiction with the commitments made by Egypt's Vice-President, Omar Suleiman; urges in this respect the Egyptian authorities to immediately disclose the whereabouts of those detained and to ensure that they are protected from all forms of torture or other ill-treatment:

6. Calls on the Egyptian authorities to fully restore and refrain from censoring communication networks, including internet and mobile services, and strongly condemns all acts of intimidation, aggression and harassment against journalists;

7. Urges telephone companies in and outside of Egypt to act responsibly to uphold freedom of expression and privacy by taking every practicable step to avoid complicity in violations of the right to freedom of

expression and freedom to receive and send information;

8. Strongly denounces the massive and grave human rights violations occurred since the 25th of January; calls on the UN Human Rights Council to hold a special session on the situation in Egypt;

9. Calls for the setting-up of an independent inquiry committee to investigate abuses of security forces and excessive use of force and prosecute those responsible for such acts through a fair trial; underlines the role that UN Human Rights mechanisms can play in this respect and calls for the immediate dispatching of human rights monitoring teams to Egypt;

10. Calls for significant and efficient EU support for democratic transformation as well as for economic and social development in Egypt, including the promotion of women's rights, and in other southern neighbours concerned, by mobilising, reviewing and adapting existing EU instruments aimed at assisting political, economic and social reforms;

11. Welcomes in this regard the constructive statement issued by Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan who called for a transitional administrationin Egyptwhich will help the shift to democracy and prevent further chaos;

12. Welcomes the Council's decision and regulation of 7 February 2011 imposing the freezing of assets owned or controlled by persons deemed to be responsible for the misappropriation of state funds in Tunisia and persons associated with them and calls on the Council to adopt the same measures as regards Egypt;

13. Calls on the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation, as an institution of the Union for the Mediterranean, to play an urgent and active role in mobilizing the civil society of the Euro-Med region for the promotion of citizenship, participation, human rights and democracy through the dialogue and the exchange between the youth of European and Mediterranean Partner countries, and particularly Arab countries;

14. Stresses that the ongoing strategic review of the European Neighbourhood Policy as well as the further shaping of the EU's relations with southern neighbours must fully take into consideration and reflect current developments in the region; points out, in this regard, that the current action plans must be radically revised with the inclusion of clear priorities accompanied by incentives as regards political reforms;

15. Takes the view that it is therefore of the utmost importance and urgency to rethink and overhaul the EU strategy towards the Mediterranean and that this new strategy should enhance the political dialogue and the support for all the democratic forces, including civil society actors; calls, in this regard, on the Council to define a set of political criteria that ENP countries must fulfil in order to be granted an "advanced status";

16. Calls on the Council and the Commission to review the ENP for Southern neighbours providing the means and the assistance for a genuine democratic transition and laying the basis for deep political and institutional reforms; insists that the review of the neighbourhood policy must prioritise criteria relating to the independence of the judiciary, respect for fundamental freedoms and the fight against corruption;

17. Considers crucial the role that the EU financial instruments for external action for the region, notably the ENPI, the EIDHR as well as the Stability Instrument, can play in this regard and calls for their strengthening in order to enable them to be used effectively and consistently in these exceptional circumstances; stresses also the importance of addressing urgently the question of rising food prices and in general of food security and rural development;

18. Supports and expects Egypt to remain committed to playing an active and constructive role in efforts aimed at finding lasting peace in the Middle East, with special regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the process of Palestinian reconciliation;

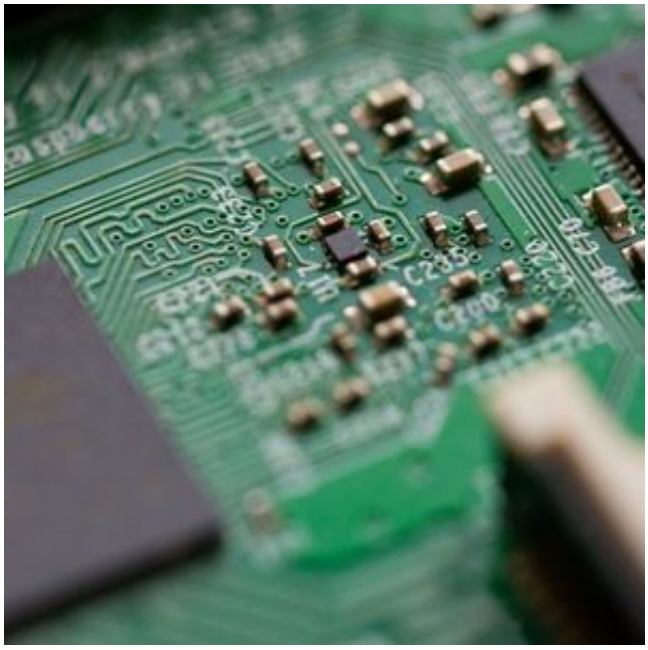
19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Egyptian authorities, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, the High Commissioner on Human Rights and the UN Human Rights Council;

[1] COM(2003)0104 final.
[2] COM(2004) 0373 final.
[3] COM(2006) 0726 final.
[4] COM(2007)0774 final.
[5]COM(2010)0207.

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Margrete Auken

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