**Beat: Politics**

# EP adopted resolutions on the respect for human rights in three countries

**Iran, Tunisia and Cambodia**

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**USPA NEWS -** On Thursday, the European Parliament adopted three resolutions on the respect for human rights in Iran, Tunisia and Cambodia. The poisoning of hundreds of schoolgirls in Iran; the recent attacks against freedom of expression and association and trade unions in Tunisia; and the case of opposition leader Kem Sokha in Cambodia were the main objectives of the resolutions.

Referring to numerous incidents since November 2022, where thousands of girls and women across Iran have been attacked with toxic chemicals to prevent them from attending education, MEPs condemn in the strongest terms this atrocious attempt to silence women and girls. Urging authorities to ensure girls have non-discriminatory access to education, MEPs call on the Iranian regime to repeal any legislation that discriminates against girls and women.

They urge the UN Human Rights Council to task the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission with an independent investigation into the schoolgirl poisonings and for those responsible to be held accountable. The resolution condemns the regime's months-long failure to act on, as well as its deliberate suppression of, credible reports of systematic toxic attacks against schoolgirls and calls on the Iranian authorities to let the International Mission and the UN Special Rapporteur have full access to information on the situation of human rights in the country.

Parliament also repeats its call to the Council to designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a terrorist organisation and to expand the EU sanctions list, including under the EU Global Human Rights sanctions mechanisms, to all those responsible for human rights violations in Iran, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, President Ebrahim Raisi, and Prosecutor General Mohammad Jafar Montazeri. The resolution was adopted by 516 votes in favour, 5 against and 14 abstentions.

**Tunisia: attacks against freedom of expression**

Deeply concerned about President Said's authoritarian drift and his instrumentalisation of Tunisia's dire socio-economic situation to reverse the country's historic democratic transition, MEPs call for an end to the ongoing crackdown on civil society in the country. They urge Tunisian authorities to immediately release Noureddine Boutar, director of Tunisia's largest independent radio station, who was arrested last month by counter-terrorist units on politically motivated grounds and unfounded allegations.

Parliament calls on the authorities to free all others arbitrarily detained including journalists, judges, lawyers, political activists and trade unionists and to respect freedom of expression and association and workers' rights, in line with Tunisia's Constitution and international treaties. Urging EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell and the member states to publicly denounce the sharp deterioration of the human rights situation in Tunisia, MEPs call for specific EU support programmes to the Ministries of Justice and Interior Affairs to be suspended.

Parliament also strongly condemns President Said's racist discourse against sub-Saharan migrants and the attacks that have ensued against them and calls on authorities to comply with international and national laws. The resolution was adopted by 496 votes in favour, 28 against and 13 abstentions.

**Cambodia: Kem Sokha**

Parliament calls on the authorities in Cambodia to immediately and unconditionally release the opposition leader Kem Sokha as well as all opposition activists convicted or held in custody on politically motivated charges. MEPs urge the authorities to ensure free and fair elections in July 2023, allowing all political parties to carry out an equal, free and transparent electoral campaign under a more inclusive and transparent National Election Committee. The largest opposition party, Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), must be reinstated immediately to be able to participate in the 2023 elections.

The resolution also calls for VOD, one of Cambodia's last independent media that has been closed in February, to be reinstated immediately. It urges the Council to adopt targeted sanctions, under the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime, against officials, to hold accountable all persons responsible for serious human rights violations and the dissolution and subsequent repression of the Cambodian opposition. The resolution was adopted by 496 votes in favour, 11 against and 36 abstentions.

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