

Press release – Human rights breaches in Belarus, Ethiopia, and Algeria



Human rights violations in Belarus, in particular the murder of Raman Bandarenka.

Parliament condemns in the strongest possible terms the murder of Raman Bandarenka in Belarus, and expresses its condolences to his family and to all families who have lost loved ones as a result of the repression of Aliaksandr Lukashenka's regime.

Mr Bandarenka, a 31-year-old art teacher, was brutally beaten on the evening of 11 November by a group of plain-clothed men in masks who reportedly had close ties to the regime. Mr Bandarenka was taken into detention where he was subjected to further beatings. He later died as a result of his injuries.

MEPs demand prompt, thorough, and independent investigations into his death and the protest-related deaths of other Belarusian civilians. They reiterate their support for the protesters' demands for freedom, democracy, dignity, and the right to choose their own destiny, while condemning the ongoing human rights violations, intimidation, and disproportionate use of force by the authorities towards peaceful demonstrators.

The text was adopted by 613 votes in favour, 41 against and 35 abstentions. For further details, the full version will be available [here](#) (26.11.2020).

The situation in Ethiopia

MEPs are deeply concerned by the current armed conflict between the federal government of Ethiopia and the regional administration of Tigray led by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), including the ongoing violence and allegations of serious breaches of fundamental human rights. They call on both parties to commit to an immediate ceasefire and to settle political

differences by democratic means within the framework of the country's constitution.

The resolution deplores the loss of life and killing of innocent civilians and the extrajudicial killings, regardless of their perpetrators. Parliament implores Ethiopia's central government and the TPLF to take immediate action to deescalate the conflict and criticises the severe restrictions preventing humanitarian workers from accessing the area.

The text was adopted by 643 votes in favour, 5 against and 46 abstentions. It will be available [in full here](#) (26.11.2020).

Human rights abuses in Algeria, in particular the case of journalist Khaled Drareni.

Parliament strongly condemns the escalation of arbitrary and unlawful arrests, detentions, and judicial harassment of journalists, human rights defenders, trade unionists, lawyers, civil society, and peaceful activists in Algeria. It also urges the Algerian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release journalist Mohamed Khaled Drareni and all those detained and charged for exercising their right to freedom of expression.

In August, Mr Drareni – a correspondent for TV5 Monde – was sentenced to three years in prison and fined 50 000 Algerian dinars for filming police attacking demonstrators in Algiers. He was formally charged with 'inciting an unarmed gathering' and 'undermining the integrity of national territory'. In September, his sentence was reduced to two years on appeal.

MEPs reiterate their call on the Algerian authorities to stop all forms of intimidation, criminalisation, or the arbitrary detention of critical voices such as journalists, bloggers and human rights defenders. They insist that appropriate steps be taken to guarantee for all the right to freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly. The resolution was adopted by 669 votes in favour, 3 against and 22 abstentions. For more details, the document will be available [in full here](#) (26.11.2020).