

Press release – Human rights breaches in China and Iran



Forced labour and the situation of the Uyghurs in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region in China

Parliament strongly condemns the Chinese government-led system of forced labour – in particular the exploitation of Uyghur, ethnic Kazakh and Kyrgyz, and other Muslim minority groups – in factories within and outside internment camps in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. It also denounces the continued transfer of forced labourers to other Chinese administrative divisions, and the fact that well-known European brands and companies have been benefiting from forced Chinese labour.

MEPs are deeply concerned about the increasingly oppressive regime that many religious and ethnic minorities, in particular Uyghurs and Kazakhs, are facing in mainland China. These “violate their human dignity, as well as their rights to freedom of cultural expression and religious belief, to freedom of speech and expression, and to peaceful assembly and association”.

They also deeply deplore the continued persecution and the serious and systematic human rights violations that amount to crimes against humanity, while urging the Chinese government to put an immediate end to the practice of arbitrary detention without charge, trial or conviction for criminal offences of members of the Uyghur and other Muslim minorities. MEPs call on the Chinese government to end the “mass incarceration” of ethnic minorities in camps and detention centres and demand the immediate and unconditional release of those detained.

The text was approved by 604 votes in favour, 20 against and 57 abstentions. For all the details, it will be available in full [here](#). (17.12.2020)

Iran, in particular the case of 2012 Sakharov Prize Laureate Nasrin Sotoudeh

MEPs strongly condemn the arbitrary detention, sentencing and, recently, return to prison of woman human rights defender, lawyer and 2012 Sakharov Prize laureate Nasrin Sotoudeh in Iran. They urge Iranian authorities to immediately and unconditionally release her and allow her to receive the healthcare she requires.

In addition, the resolution condemns the recent executions in Iran of France-based journalist Ruhollah Zam, editor of the Amad News Telegram channel, and wrestler Navid Afkari, while urging Iran to immediately halt the imminent execution of Swedish-Iranian academic Ahmadreza Djalali. It calls on EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell and all EU countries to urgently intervene to try to halt plans to execute Mr Djalali, quash his death sentence and secure his immediate release.

The text asks all EU member states to jointly issue public statements and undertake diplomatic initiatives to monitor unfair trials and visit prisons where human rights defenders and other prisoners of conscience, including EU nationals, are being detained in Iran. It also demands targeted EU measures against Iranian officials who have committed serious human rights violations, including the recent executions of Ruhollah Zam and Navid Afkari, as well as against those involved in gross human rights abuses, such as judges who have handed the death sentence to journalists, human rights defenders, political dissidents and activists.

The text was approved by 614 votes in favour, 12 against and 63 abstentions. For all the details, it will be available in full [here](#). (17.12.2020)

The situation in Egypt

The vote on a third resolution on the situation in Egypt has been postponed until tomorrow, Friday 18 December. The outcome of the final vote on this resolution will be announced at 17.00 CET.