



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0023

Brutal repression against protesters in Iran

European Parliament resolution of 22 January 2026 on the brutal repression against protesters in Iran (2026/2565(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iran,
- having regard to its resolution of 13 November 2025 on addressing transnational repression of human rights defenders¹,
- having regard to the statements by the President of the Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), Kaja Kallas, following the violent crackdown in January 2026,
- having regard to the awarding of the 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom Movement in Iran,
- having regard to the decision by the President of the European Parliament, Roberta Metsola, to ban all diplomatic staff and representatives of the Iranian regime from all Parliament premises,
- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
- having regard to the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime,
- having regard to the EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them,

¹ Texts adopted, P10_TA(2025)0258.

- having regard to the joint statement of 13 January 2026 by UN Special Rapporteurs and independent experts,
 - having regard to the Charter of the United Nations,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to the reports of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran,
 - having regard to the press release issued by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on 10 January 2026, entitled 'Iran: UN Fact-Finding Mission calls for immediate restoration of internet access and adherence to international human rights law',
 - having regard to Rules 136(2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 28 December 2025, demonstrations broke out in Iran and quickly developed into nationwide protests, with tens of thousands of Iranians pouring onto the streets across different cities and provinces as of 8 January 2026, rising to hundreds of thousands in the following days; whereas the demonstrations were initiated by bazaar merchants who closed their shops to protest against Iran's faltering economy, their marginalisation within it, the collapse of the currency and the erosion of living standards, and they evolved into larger anti-government protests representing a wide spectrum of Iranian society, with demonstrators calling for fundamental political change and an end to the current regime;
 - B. whereas the demonstrations were initially spurred by deep-seated grievances over the disastrous state of the country's economy, skyrocketing food prices, rising inflation and widespread corruption; whereas the Iranian regime has consistently failed to meet the basic needs of its population;
 - C. whereas the Iranian security forces, including the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and the police, have carried out a systematic violent nationwide crackdown on protesters, using lethal force enabled by Chinese equipment and surveillance technology, and murdering and detaining thousands of peaceful demonstrators; whereas there are reports that the Iranian security forces have used chemical weapons to suppress the protests; whereas the number of people killed is currently underestimated because an internet blackout is impeding communication; whereas according to the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran, credible reports indicate that the Supreme National Security Council issued a statement ordering the security forces to wage a 'decisive' crackdown to end the protests; whereas according to the UN Fact-Finding Mission state violence was particularly brutal in ethnic minority regions; whereas the Iranian authorities have carried out mass arbitrary arrests, detaining thousands of protesters,

activists, journalists and human rights defenders, without due process and on the basis of false charges relating to national security; whereas the Iranian judiciary has accelerated summary proceedings against detained protesters in unfair trials, and has imposed the death penalty; whereas during the protests the Iranian judiciary carried out death sentences based on prior convictions;

- D. whereas these actions constitute serious violations of international human rights law, including obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a state party;
- E. whereas Iran continues to apply the death penalty as a key instrument of repression to intimidate protesters and silence dissent;
- F. whereas since 8 January 2026, the Iranian authorities have imposed a country-wide communications blackout, cutting off internet access and shutting down mobile phone and landline networks in one of the most comprehensive and sophisticated blackouts in global history, hindering the ability of the Iranian people to communicate, organise and inform the outside world amid a brutal crackdown, with the aim of obscuring the true extent of the protests and the brutality of the crackdown and of undermining medical assistance; whereas Iran is a major perpetrator of internet shutdowns and has a long history of blocking internet and telecommunication access during times of unrest to silence dissent and crack down on protests;
- G. whereas the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association is protected by Article 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- H. whereas the regime's leadership continues to be oblivious to the legitimate demands of the protesters; whereas according to the United Nations Statistics Division nearly 60 % of Iran's population is under the age of 39, and most of the population was born after the 1979 Islamic Revolution;
- I. whereas the Iranian authorities have publicly threatened to further crack down on the protests and harshly punish those involved; whereas on 14 January 2026 Iran's Justice Minister reportedly stated that anyone arrested after 8 January 2026 was a criminal and terrorist, effectively criminalising peaceful protest and further repressing freedom of expression and assembly; whereas Parliament has consistently and unequivocally condemned the Iranian regime's oppression and violence against its own people, including the use of executions, the imposition of death sentences following unfair trials, inhumane detention conditions, and the systematic targeting of political activists and of ethnic and religious communities; whereas Parliament has repeatedly called for the IRGC to be designated a terrorist organisation;

- J. whereas seven UN human rights experts called upon the Iranian authorities to break the cycle of violence, respect the people's fundamental right to be able to voice dissent and participate in peaceful protests without fear of reprisals, and address the people's demands regarding civil, political, economic and cultural rights;
- K. whereas the recent wave of demonstrations is the culmination of a long series of mass protests followed by terrible crackdowns; whereas Iran's last nationwide uprisings – the 'Green Movement' upheaval in 2009 and the 'Woman, Life, Freedom' movement of September 2022, sparked by the killing of 22-year-old Jina Mahsa Amini by the country's morality police – also met with brutal repression, targeting women with shotgun fire to their faces, breasts and genitals;
- L. whereas the European Parliament awarded its 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom movement in Iran as a tribute to all the brave women, men and young people in Iran who, under enormous pressure, have kept up the fight for their rights and for change;
- M. whereas state policies have enabled the routine enforcement of mandatory dress regulations through morality patrols, surveillance technologies and administrative penalties, resulting in arrests, fines, denial of access to education and employment, and custodial sentences for women and girls who do not comply; whereas there are documented cases of physical abuse and deaths in custody linked to such enforcement; whereas the immense courage and resolve of the brave women of Iran, who have met the regime's cowardly tactics with fearlessness and defiance, have been crucial to the resistance against this brutal regime;
- N. whereas the Islamic Republic of Iran has played a highly destabilising role within the Middle East and the broader region, including by propping up terrorist proxy groups such as Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis in Yemen, Hamas in Gaza and Shia militias in Iraq, and establishing an axis of terror stretching throughout the entire region; whereas Iran's pernicious influence is not limited to the Middle East, as it continues to pose an enormous risk to European security and democracies around the world through hybrid threats and malign cyber activities, including by abetting Russia in its war of aggression against Ukraine, for example by supplying armed drones, missiles and ammunition and providing technology and training that has allowed Russia to ramp up its production, and supporting the Venezuelan dictatorship;
- O. whereas credible evidence indicates that Iranian diplomatic missions in several Member States have been involved in propaganda, disinformation and intimidation targeting Iranian diaspora

communities in Europe, in breach of international law and the principles governing diplomatic relations;

- P. whereas the EU has adopted three sanctions regimes against Iran: one in response to serious human rights violations in the country, renewed annually and last extended until 13 April 2026, one in relation to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the third in response to Iran's military support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and for armed groups and entities in the Middle East and the Red Sea region; whereas via these regimes more than 230 individuals and 40 entities in Iran, including the IRGC, are currently under sanction;
 - Q. whereas, in January 2026, Parliament, through a decision by its President, prohibited all diplomatic staff and representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran from entering any Parliament premises in Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg in response to the Iranian authorities' violent crackdown on nationwide protests and their refusal to respect fundamental freedoms, with Iranian passport holders subject to screening and denial of entry if identified as acting on behalf of the regime;
 - R. whereas in recent years the Iranian authorities have intensified the persecution and punishment of ethnic and religious communities, notably Christians, with national courts handing down lengthy prison sentences on charges related solely to their faith or religious activities;
1. Expresses its unequivocal condemnation of and outrage at the brutal repression and mass murders perpetrated by the Iranian regime against protesters who have taken to the streets in dozens of cities over the past two weeks; expresses its full solidarity with the people of Iran and its brave and legitimate protest movement which is demanding dignity, safety and respect for the rights of the Iranian people;
 2. Demands that the Iranian authorities, under the rule of dictator Ali Khamenei, unconditionally end the use of violence against peaceful protesters, immediately halt all executions and cease the murder and repression of civilians exercising their fundamental rights; demands that these rights, in particular the freedoms of expression and assembly, be upheld unconditionally and at all times;
 3. Calls for the immediate release of all imprisoned demonstrators and political prisoners; is appalled by the horrifically high death toll and the large number of protesters unlawfully detained;
 4. Extends its heartfelt condolences to the families of all those who have been killed as a result of the violent repression by the Iranian authorities; expresses its profound indignation at reports of attacks and intimidation carried out by oppressive security forces and

members of the IRGC against the families and relatives of those killed during the protests; is deeply concerned about the reported abhorrent practice by the Iranian authorities of extorting large sums of money from the families of victims for the return of the bodies of their deceased relatives;

5. Calls on the Council, in accordance with the Council Common Position of 27 December 2001 on the application of specific measures to combat terrorism², Council Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001³, Directive (EU) 2017/541⁴ and the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime, to proceed without delay with the full designation of the IRGC, including the Basij militia and the Quds Force, as terrorist organisations; deplores some Member States' abiding opposition to strengthening restrictive measures against Iran's regime; calls for such designation to be reflected in the EU's restrictive measures regime; calls for the expansion and strict enforcement of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime and other EU restrictive measures, including asset freezes and visa bans, against all Iranian officials responsible for repression and against all entities under the control of, or acting on behalf of, the Office of the Supreme Leader, including the placement of all relevant IRGC components and individuals on the EU terrorist list and the application of asset freezes, travel bans and other appropriate restrictive measures; emphasises that the IRGC, including all its branches and affiliated entities, plays a central role in the violent repression of peaceful demonstrators, and in serious human rights violations, extrajudicial killings, and state-sponsored terrorism, both at national and regional level; calls on the Member States to simultaneously take all appropriate national measures to ensure full implementation and enforcement of this designation;
6. Pays tribute to and expresses its strong support for the courageous Iranian people who, for weeks, have taken to the streets to protest against the oppression by the regime and extremely difficult economic and social conditions; commends the courage of the many young people, women and human rights defenders who continue to fight for their rights despite the personal repercussions and brutal repression they face; recognises the crucial role played by the 'Woman, Life, Freedom' movement in instilling courage in the

² OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 93,

ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/compos/2001/931/oj>.

³ Council Regulation (EC) No 2580/2001 of 27 December 2001 on specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities with a view to combating terrorism (OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 70, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2001/2580/oj>).

⁴ Directive (EU) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA and amending Council Decision 2005/671/JHA (OJ L 88, 31.3.2017, p. 6, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2017/541/oj>).

population and protesters and in exposing the regime's weakness and detachment from the Iranian people; condemns the sanctions imposed by the Iranian authorities against Members of the European Parliament and of national parliaments and calls for them to be lifted immediately;

7. Strongly condemns the widespread, brutal, intentional and disproportionate use of force by Iranian security forces against peaceful protesters; deplores the fact that these killings are not the result of sporadic clashes but of a widespread and systematic policy, and of a premeditated decision to eliminate any resistance and protests; is alarmed that the murdering of thousands of protesters signals a chilling shift in the Iranian regime's policy of oppression, from deterrence to strategic elimination; calls on the Member States to hold Iranian officials who are proven to be directly involved in the ongoing repression accountable for their crimes under international law; calls for the EU and its Member States to prepare for all possible scenarios, including a potential collapse of the Iranian regime, and to ensure that no perpetrator of repression is granted asylum within the territory of the EU at any time;
8. Demands that all protesters, human rights defenders and journalists currently held under arrest in Iran be freed unconditionally; demands that the authorities inform all families of the location of their detained relatives; calls for lawyers and international observers to be granted unhindered access to all those detained during the protests and for the international community to be informed of the identity of detainees; calls for the immediate release and safe repatriation of all EU nationals currently imprisoned in Iran and strongly condemns the regime's shameless use of hostage diplomacy;
9. Categorically rejects the Iranian authorities' claims that the protests were instigated by foreign agents; notes that the protests stem from the profound discontent of large segments of the Iranian population, particularly young people, women and minority groups, with the deep and multiple crises facing the country;
10. Recalls Iran's international human rights obligations, including respect for the right to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and the right to life, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international treaties to which Iran is a party; calls for the EU to further support civil society, human rights and humanitarian organisations in Iran;
11. Stresses the deeply illegitimate and violent nature of the inhumane Iranian regime, which is based solely on terror, fear and intimidation and is opposed to any religious, cultural and ethnic pluralism; calls on the Commission and the Member States to exert effective pressure on the regime; recognises in the vast wave of protests an unequivocal sign of the unsustainability of this system after decades

of oppression, and calls for a free and democratic transition in Iran; extends its full solidarity to the Iranian diaspora, which plays a crucial role in demanding freedom and democracy and supporting the protests; recognises the Iranian people as the sole legitimate source of authority and sovereignty in Iran;

12. Calls for the measures to be coordinated with like-minded partners, accompanied by efforts to counter sanctions circumvention globally; welcomes the United States' recent adoption of targeted sanctions against senior Iranian officials responsible for repression, and urges the EU to take similar action; calls for the expulsion of IRGC members' relatives who are studying or working in the EU;
13. Calls for the EU and its Member States to use all tools at their disposal to prevent, deter and respond to malicious cyber activities and foreign information manipulation and interference, including those conducted by or attributed to the Iranian authorities; encourages the full use of the EU Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox, including restrictive measures against individuals and entities responsible for cyberattacks, and of the EU sanctions regime targeting such attacks; urges the EU to reinforce its capabilities in the areas of strategic communication, resilience-building and attribution, in coordination with international partners;
14. Condemns the Iranian regime's efforts to censor the protests by cutting internet access and telephone networks across the country; calls for all bans on online-based communications and services within Iran to be lifted immediately; calls for the EU and its Member States to significantly scale up technical and financial support to ensure secure digital access and the provision of censorship-circumvention tools and digital protection for Iranian civil society, journalists and human rights defenders; calls on technology and satellite service providers to explore all lawful and feasible means to facilitate safe access to communication services, such as 'direct to cell' connectivity, to ensure uninterrupted information access for Iranian citizens, particularly in order to enable emergency communication and alerts via SMS, and to prevent the misuse of platforms for repression;
15. Highlights the fact that for decades the Iranian regime has persistently engaged in the systematic targeting of human rights activists, political dissidents, minority communities and women, in particular through vicious patterns of repression; expresses solidarity with all individuals in Iran persecuted for their beliefs or identity and recognises the courage of minority communities facing systemic discrimination, including Kurds, Baluchis, Baha'is and Christians; calls for the immediate and unconditional release of all persons detained solely for exercising their freedom of religion or belief;

16. Reiterates its calls on Iran to grant immediate and unhindered access to the UN-mandated Fact-Finding Mission, given the need for international scrutiny in this climate of total impunity in which the Iranian authorities have systematically committed serious crimes under international law, including murder, torture, rape and enforced disappearances to silence dissent, and the need for evidence to be collected and preserved to support future prosecutions; calls for the EU to support the extension of the mandate of the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Iran in the Human Rights Council and extend its mandate to the investigation of the current atrocities;
17. Notes the prominent role played by women and girls in the protests and condemns the regime's systemic oppression of women and other vulnerable groups through laws and regulations that severely restrict freedoms and rights, including the degrading compulsory hijab law and its abusive enforcement, severe restrictions on women's sexual and reproductive health, and violations of women's political, social, economic, cultural and personal rights; stresses that inheritance discrimination, and testimony and nationality laws, which grant women unequal legal status and limit their autonomy in both public and private life, are contrary to international human rights standards to which Iran is bound;
18. Decries once again the appallingly high number of executions carried out in the past two years, particularly since the outbreak of the recent demonstrations in late December, as a symbol of the regime's utter disregard for human life and dignity;
19. Recalls that Iran has the highest death sentence rate per capita in the world and that since the Woman, Life, Freedom uprising in 2022, the Iranian authorities have embarked on a relentless execution spree, including against dissidents, women, journalists and minorities; decries the fact that in 2025 alone the regime executed 1 500 people; reiterates the EU's long-standing opposition to capital punishment and calls for the immediate abolition of the death penalty;
20. Expresses its full support for the Iranian opposition and invites the VP/HR to initiate an inclusive dialogue with the Iranian democratic opposition, with the aim of promoting a democratic, free and pluralistic future for Iran; calls for representatives of the Iranian democratic opposition to be invited to the European Parliament, while reiterating that it is up to the Iranian people to determine their future government; encourages the Commission to expand technical and financial assistance to Iranian civil society; calls for the different actors in the democratic opposition to work together, paving the way for a just, inclusive and democratic process that succeeds in bringing freedom and dignity to all Iranian citizens, irrespective of their ethnicity, religion and gender; calls for the EU and its Member

States to cooperate closely with like-minded partners in order to support a free Iran in which universal human rights and equality prevail, shaped by the Iranian people themselves; is convinced that promoting the country's diverse communities and fundamental regional, cultural and ethnic diversity is key to securing a democratic and peaceful future for Iran;

21. Underlines once again how the Iranian regime has actively sown chaos and destruction across the region for decades, while engaging in brutal patterns of internal and transnational repression; condemns the Iranian authorities' brutal use of transnational repression, both online and offline, to silence, intimidate, repress, coerce or even abduct opponents, as well as to threaten their families abroad; calls on the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, to strengthen prevention, protection and response mechanisms within the EU, and to ensure that all acts of transnational repression are effectively investigated and prosecuted; stresses that Iran continues to constitute the largest and most substantial threat to the security and stability of the broader region and the most significant obstacle to peace; reiterates its firm condemnation of Iran's malign activities and interference across the region and beyond, most prominently in Lebanon, Syria, Yemen, Iraq and the West Bank and Gaza;
22. Notes that Iran and Russia have increasingly shared critical intelligence and cooperated on evading sanctions through front companies, banking links and oil transfers with tracking devices turned off; calls for better enforcement of EU sanctions, an urgent upgrade of automatic identification systems to counter sanctions and embargo evasion, and increased surveillance and inspections of suspected Iranian vessels;
23. Calls on the VP/HR, in coordination with the Member States, to intensify diplomatic engagement in support of the Iranian people by exploring the establishment of an enhanced EU diplomatic presence or representation capable of providing protection, humanitarian assistance and consular support to individuals at risk for exercising their fundamental rights, including peaceful protesters; stresses the need to consider measures that could provide points of refuge, information and assistance in line with international law and relevant legal precedents of EU Member States, with the objective of improving the Union's capacity to monitor, report and respond to serious human rights violations on the ground;
24. Welcomes the VP/HR's commitment to implement further coercive measures against Iran; calls on the Council and the Member States to swiftly expand existing restrictive measures in order to respond urgently and appropriately to the ongoing repression; welcomes the fact that the EU is considering targeted sanctions against individuals and entities responsible for the violent repression of protesters and urges their swift adoption;

25. Demands that the European External Action Service (EEAS) produce regular reports on the situation in Iran; suggests establishing or identifying a domain in which the names of all victims of the recent massacres can be registered, in order to document and preserve records of those killed or harmed;
26. Calls on the EU Member States and the EEAS to request a special session of the UN Human Rights Council on the human rights crisis in Iran to demonstrate and foster legitimate international opposition to the conduct of the Iranian regime;
27. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support all accountability efforts within and outside the UN that are working towards the documentation of deaths and their prompt, independent and transparent investigation, including through the collection of testimonies and evidence from people fleeing the country; welcomes the UN Human Rights Council's decision to hold a special session on the situation in Iran;
28. Stresses that any normalisation of relations with Iran is conditional upon the unconditional release of all political prisoners, the verifiable end of systematic repression, and genuine progress towards democracy and the rule of law;
29. Calls on the EEAS, the Commission and the Member States to continue to raise the violations at the hands of the Iranian regime in bilateral and multilateral forums, and to ensure that EU restrictive measures remain targeted, evidence-based and focused on individuals and entities responsible for serious human rights abuses;
30. Welcomes the decision by its President, Roberta Metsola, to bar all diplomatic staff and representatives of the Iranian regime from all Parliament premises; calls on the Member States to follow suit and adopt similar restrictions, including revoking, if necessary, the diplomatic status of the staff of Iran's diplomatic and consular missions across the EU;
31. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Member States, and the Office of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.