European Parliament
2024-2029

TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0406

Case of Eritrean-Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak, arbitrarily detained in Eritrea

European Parliament resolution of 26 November 2026 on the case of Eritrean-Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak, arbitrarily detained in Eritrea (2026/2990(RSP))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its previous resolutions on Eritrea,

– having regard to Rules 150(5) and 136(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas September 2026 marked 25 years since Eritrean-Swedish journalist Dawit Isaak was arrested in Eritrea alongside other journalists, including Temesgen Ghebreyesus, Seyoum Tsehaye and Amanuel Asrat, and political figures, following calls for democratic reform;

B. whereas Eritrea banned independent media in 2001; whereas Dawit Isaak remains detained without charge or trial, incommunicado and without access to his family, legal representatives or Swedish consular officials;

C. whereas his family has endured years of distress and uncertainty because Eritrea’s authorities have provided no credible information on his whereabouts or health;

D. whereas Swedish and EU officials, and successive Swedish governments and political parties, have repeatedly sought his release, including when Sweden’s Foreign Minister visited Eritrea in December 2025;

E. whereas the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights found the detention of the journalists arrested in September 2001 arbitrary and unlawful and urged Eritrea to release them; whereas the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded in 2023 that Dawit Isaak’s detention was arbitrary;

1. Strongly condemns Dawit Isaak’s 25-year arbitrary detention as a prisoner of conscience, expresses grave concern for his life and safety and demands his immediate, unconditional release, enabling his safe return to Sweden;

2. Urges Eritrea’s authorities, pending his release, to provide credible proof of life and information on his whereabouts and health, and to grant immediate access to his family, legal representatives, Swedish consular officials and independent medical personnel;

3. Calls for an independent investigation into allegations of torture and other ill-treatment, and insists that those responsible be held accountable;

4. Strongly condemns decades of systematic human rights violations by Eritrea’s authorities, including arbitrary detention, torture and degrading treatment of journalists, political opponents, religious leaders and civilians; calls for the immediate release of all prisoners of conscience and respect for fundamental freedoms and the rule of law;

5. Welcomes the efforts of the African Union (AU), UN, human rights organisations and international partners; calls on the AU, eastern and southern African countries, and the OACPS to engage with Eritrea and work closely with the EU to free Dawit Isaak and other political prisoners;

6. Calls on the VP/HR, the EEAS, the EU Delegation and the Member States to intensify coordinated high-level diplomatic efforts with Eritrea, working closely with Sweden and the AU, to secure Dawit Isaak’s release; calls on the EEAS to keep Parliament informed;

7. Urges the Commission and the EEAS to enforce human rights conditionality, ensuring that no EU funding directly or indirectly benefits Eritrea’s state apparatus until Dawit Isaak is released and verifiable progress on the rule of law is demonstrated;

8. Calls on the Council to consider targeted sanctions against individuals responsible for serious human rights violations in Eritrea;

9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the VP/HR, the Swedish Government, the Eritrean authorities, the AU, the UN Human Rights Council and the OACPS.