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Human rights and democracy in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter – annual report 2025

European Parliament resolution of 21 January 2026 on human rights and democracy in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter – annual report 2025 (2025/2166(INI))

(C/2026/3690)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- having regard to the European Convention on Human Rights,
- having regard to Articles 2, 3, 8, 21, 23 and 36 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU),
- having regard to Articles 17 and 207 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU),
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other relevant United Nations human rights treaties and instruments,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted on 9 December 1948,
- having regard to the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, adopted on 12 August 1949,
- having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 10 December 1984 and the Optional Protocol thereto, adopted on 18 December 2002,
- having regard to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 2007,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 12 December 2006 and the Optional Protocol thereto, adopted on 13 December 2006,
- having regard to the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, proclaimed by UN General Assembly Resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981,
- having regard to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities of 18 December 1992,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto, adopted on 25 May 2000,
- having regard to Protocols Nos 6 and 13 to the Council of Europe Convention of 28 April 1983 for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 27 January 2025 on EU Priorities in UN Human Rights Fora in 2025,

- having regard to the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024, adopted by the Council on 17 November 2020, and its mid-term review adopted on 9 June 2023,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 of 7 December 2020 concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses ⁽¹⁾,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009 ⁽²⁾,
- having regard to the EU strategy on the rights of the child (COM(2021)0142),
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief,
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on freedom of expression online and offline, adopted by the Council on 12 May 2014,
- having regard to the revised EU Guidelines on EU policy towards third countries on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, adopted by the Council on 16 September 2019,
- having regard to the revised EU Guidelines on children and armed conflict, approved by the Council on 24 June 2024,
- having regard to the joint proposal from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 3 May 2023 for a Council regulation on restrictive measures against serious acts of corruption (JOIN(2023)0013),
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on promoting compliance with international humanitarian law,
- having regard to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 17 July 1998,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 January 2019 on EU Guidelines and the mandate of the EU Special Envoy on the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU ⁽³⁾,
- having regard to its resolution of 8 July 2021 on the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (EU Magnitsky Act) ⁽⁴⁾,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 27 May 2024 on the alignment of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 with the multiannual financial framework 2021-2027,
- having regard to the EU Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in External Action 2021-2025 (GAP III),
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the Council on 14 June 2004,
- having regard to the 2024 EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World,
- having regard to its Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, which in 2025 was awarded to Belarusian journalist Andrzej Poczobut and Georgian journalist Mzia Amaglobeli,
- having regard to its resolution of 2 April 2025 on human rights and democracy in the world and the European Union's policy on the matter – annual report 2024 ⁽⁵⁾, and to its previous resolutions on earlier annual reports,

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 410I, 7.12.2020, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/1998/oj>.

⁽²⁾ OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/947/oj>.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 411, 27.11.2020, p. 30.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 99, 1.3.2022, p. 152.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C, C/2025/4390, 9.9.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/4390/oj>.

- having regard to its resolutions on breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law (known as urgency resolutions), adopted in accordance with Rule 150 of its Rules of Procedure, in particular those adopted in 2025,
 - having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (A10-0262/2025),
- A. whereas the EU is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, as set out in Articles 2 and 21 TEU; whereas the EU's action worldwide must be guided by the universality and indivisibility of human rights and by the fact that the effective protection and defence of human rights and democracy is at the core of the EU's external action;
 - B. whereas consistency and coherence across the EU's internal and external policies are key to achieving an effective and credible EU human rights policy and in defending and supporting freedom and democracy;
 - C. whereas democratic systems are the most suitable to guarantee that everybody has the ability to enjoy their human rights and fundamental rights; whereas a world of democracies, understood as mature democratic systems, is an altogether safer world, given their significant checks and balances to prevent the unpredictable behaviour of autocracies on the international stage; whereas today, only 29 % of the world's population lives in liberal democracies, which is a sharp decrease compared to 52 % in 2009; whereas the rise in authoritarianism, illiberalism and populism threatens the global rules-based order, the protection and promotion of human rights in the world, and the values and principles on which the EU is founded; whereas terrorism and extremism are also on the rise and also threaten these values and principles;
 - D. whereas the EU strongly believes in and fully supports multilateralism, a rules-based global order and the set of universal values, principles and norms that guide the UN member states and that the UN member states have pledged to uphold, in accordance with the UN Charter;
 - E. whereas the global backlash against gender-equality and fundamental rights, including women's rights, and the rise in anti-LGBTIQ+ rhetoric, undermines the rights of the most vulnerable people;
 - F. whereas the misuse of digital surveillance and artificial intelligence technologies increasingly threatens privacy, freedom of expression, and human rights defenders;
 - G. whereas the legitimacy of the international rules-based order, which the EU strongly supports and seeks to safeguard, is dependent on compliance with the orders of international bodies, such as the UN Security Council resolutions and orders and decisions issued by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and the International Criminal Court (ICC); whereas there are increasing and unprecedented global threats to compliance with such orders and decisions, as well as, generally, with international law, human rights law and international humanitarian law in emerging and ongoing conflicts; whereas authoritarian and illiberal regimes distort the use of multilateral forums to advance a reactionary agenda that challenges human rights and the multilateral and rules-based order; whereas discrediting and attacking multilateral organisations has serious consequences, such as fostering a culture of impunity; whereas international institutions, their officials and those cooperating with them have increasingly been subjected to attacks and threats; whereas the international community, including the EU, bears responsibility for upholding the rules-based international order by ensuring universal compliance, including by its partners;
 - H. whereas massive cuts in international funding for human rights, democracy support, and the independent media have turned the EU into one of the last major global actors in this domain;
 - I. whereas the UN is facing a seriously concerning and dire financial situation, with a cut in staffing of 20 % and its general budget facing a USD 500 million cut, together with further significant cuts to its peacekeeping, humanitarian and health agencies following withdrawal of international financial support;

- J. whereas the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2024 was extended to 2027 and work should start on drafting an improved plan for 2028-2034, alongside the new multiannual financial framework (MFF), to address the new challenges that the world is facing; whereas the proposed new MFF's revised structure lacks a dedicated programme and specific budgetary earmarking for human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, raising concerns about underfunding, lack of predictability, and erosion of thematic priorities;
- K. whereas human rights defenders (HRDs), including women's rights defenders, and civil society organisations (CSOs) are crucial partners in the EU's efforts to safeguard and advance human rights, democracy and the rule of law; whereas governments and non-state actors around the world are shrinking the civil space further by increasingly censoring, silencing and harassing HRDs, and CSOs, journalists, religious communities, opposition leaders and other vulnerable groups, among others, in their work, shrinking the civil space even further;
- L. whereas governments around the world are increasingly censoring, silencing and harassing HRDs and CSOs in their work; whereas this behaviour includes measures encompassing strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), restrictive government policies, defamation campaigns, discrimination, intimidation and violence, including extrajudicial killings, abductions, and arbitrary arrests and detention; whereas attacks on HRDs are increasingly extending to their families and communities;
- M. whereas persecution of religious minorities constitutes a violation of the freedom of religion or belief, one of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and in international law;
- N. whereas Christian communities in the Middle East, among the oldest in the world, continue to face severe persecution, discrimination, forced displacement and restrictions on their freedom of religion or belief;
- O. whereas Directive (EU) 2024/1712 ⁽⁶⁾ amended Directive 2011/36/EU ⁽⁷⁾ to include the exploitation of surrogacy, forced marriage and illegal adoption among the practices constituting trafficking in human beings;
- P. whereas the Istanbul Convention, which the EU recently joined, despite being ratified only by some Member States, affirms that armed conflicts result in repeated human rights violations affecting civilian populations, especially women, who are subject to rape and sexual violence as a weapon of war and suffer an intensification of gender-based violence during and after conflicts, with survivors left without access to justice or adequate medical and psychological support; whereas the aforementioned Convention defines violence against women as a human rights violation;
- Q. whereas gender equality is a core EU value, and the human rights of women and girls, including their sexual and reproductive rights, continue to be violated across the world; whereas women experience a unique and disproportionate impact from conflicts, climate change and migration, including increased risks of gender-based violence, economic marginalisation and barriers to accessing resources; whereas women-focused HRDs and CSOs continue to experience shrinking space for their critical work, as well as threats of violence, harassment and intimidation;
- R. whereas civil society organisations representing persons with disabilities and their families play an essential role in advancing human rights and building democratic and inclusive societies; whereas persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls, face intersectional discrimination in contexts of conflict, migration and trafficking, and whereas the EU's external action must protect their full inclusion and equal access, in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

⁽⁶⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1712 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 amending Directive 2011/36/EU on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims (OJ L, 2024/1712, 24.6.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1712/oj>).

⁽⁷⁾ Directive 2011/36/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 5 April 2011 on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting its victims (OJ L 101, 15.4.2011, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2011/36/oj>).

- S. whereas the climate crisis poses a threat to humanity as a whole and is, at its core, a human rights crisis, undermining the rights to life, food, water and sanitation, health, culture and beyond in every region of the world, as recognised by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the UN Human Rights Council;
- T. whereas democracy support is at the centre of EU external action, with electoral observation as one of the key instruments of the EU toolbox;
- U. whereas in 2024, more than half the world's population went to the polls, and many of those elections were marked by manipulation, disinformation and attempts at interference from inside or outside the country; whereas similar patterns are being observed in 2025;
- V. whereas the 2025 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders (RSF) reveals that more than half of the world's population lives in countries where press freedom is in a 'very grave' situation, with the global state of press freedom now classified as a 'difficult situation' for the first time in the index's history; whereas as of Thursday 10 September 2025, according to RSF's 2025 Barometer, since 1 January 2025, 51 journalists and media workers have been killed, 527 have been detained, 25 have been taken hostage, and 142 have gone missing;
- W. whereas the past year has been marked by a further proliferation of foreign influence and of 'foreign agents' laws, including in countries with EU candidate status, targeting CSOs and media outlets and attempting to prevent them from receiving financial support from abroad, including from the EU and its Member States, fostering a climate of fear and self-censorship;
- X. whereas 272 million children and young people are being deprived of their fundamental right to education and remain out of school, representing a considerable increase of 21 million compared to the last reported estimate of 251 million according to the UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report 2025; whereas girls and women continue to be affected not only by poverty but also by cultural norms, gender bias, child marriage and violence through official, discriminatory policies that prevent them from accessing education and the labour market, with one in three adolescent girls from the poorest households having never been to school, according to UNICEF;
- Y. whereas the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (EUGHRSR) – EU Magnitsky Act ⁽⁸⁾, adopted in December 2020, enables the EU to impose restrictive measures on individuals and entities responsible for serious human rights violations worldwide; whereas certain EU Member States have adopted their own national Magnitsky-style legislation;
- Z. whereas transnational repression is a well-documented phenomenon, taking place in a global context of deteriorating human rights, shrinking civic space and the growing prevalence of increasingly repressive and assertive authoritarian regimes;
- AA. whereas the lack of judicial independence undermines the separation of powers, weakens the rule of law and contributes to democratic backsliding;
- AB. whereas territories of certain countries – including in the EU – remain under military occupation by foreign powers in violation of international law and relevant UN Security Council resolutions; whereas persistent violations of human rights, including property rights, freedom of movement and worship, as well as restrictions on access to and preservation of cultural and religious heritage in the occupied areas, continue; whereas the issue of missing persons and the right of families to truth and justice remain unresolved;

⁽⁸⁾ Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1999 of 7 December 2020 concerning restrictive measures against serious human rights violations and abuses (OJ L 410I, 7.12.2020, p. 13, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2020/1999/oj>) and Council Regulation (EU) 2020/1998 of 7 December 2020.

Growing threats and global challenges to human rights and democracy

1. Reasserts its positions expressed in its 2024 annual report adopted on 2 April 2025 regarding the universality and indivisibility of human rights and the protection of the inherent dignity of all human beings based on the EU values and principles that guide Union action on the international stage under Article 21 TEU; reiterates, in particular, its conclusions regarding the rights of women, children, migrants and refugees, religious and ethnic minorities, and all those who continue to be affected by human rights abuses in particularly insidious ways due to their race, ethnicity, religion, caste, gender, sexuality, disability or socio-economic status, as well as the concern for violations of freedom of thought, conscience or religion, of expression, media freedom, the right to information and public participation; reiterates its unwavering opposition to the death penalty;
2. Insists that the effective respect and protection of human rights and freedoms must be the cornerstone of the EU's external policy; calls for the EU to continue developing a comprehensive toolbox to strengthen human rights and democracy globally; calls for the EU and its Member States to continue to lead by example, in line with its values, and to promote and strictly uphold human rights and international justice;

Democratic backsliding

3. Condemns the deterioration of the global human rights landscape and the clearly accelerating trends in human rights violations and abuses and democratic backsliding around the world, such as violations of women's rights, executions, extrajudicial killings, arbitrary arrests and detentions, torture and ill treatment, gender-based violence, and clampdowns on civil society, political opponents, marginalised and vulnerable groups including children and elderly people, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, and ethnic and religious minorities;
4. Stresses that the EU must be fully prepared to counter the rise of authoritarianism, totalitarianism and populism, as well as the increasing violations of the principles of universality of human rights, democracy and international humanitarian law; notes that the right to participate in free and fair elections is under attack by authoritarian, totalitarian and illiberal regimes; deplores that obstacles to the full enjoyment of such rights are increasingly present in a number of mature democracies; highlights that the aforementioned regimes conduct fake elections with the aim of legitimating their power, since they lack real conditions for contestation, legitimacy and pluralism;
5. Highlights the importance of providing quality education for girls and ensuring equal opportunities as essential for women's empowerment and the full exercise of their rights; stresses that investment in girls' education globally yields positive outcomes for societies for generations to come; reiterates the necessity of age-appropriate, evidence-based comprehensive sexuality and relationships education and, both within the EU and beyond, of eliminating gender stereotypes and harmful societal norms that drive inequalities;
6. Stresses the critical need to protect the rights of pregnant women, ensuring comprehensive support for their health, safety and dignity;
7. Stresses the importance of combating all forms of sexual exploitation of women, including trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation; underlines the need to prevent and counter the legalisation and normalisation of prostitution, which risk reinforcing exploitation, abuse and organised crime; calls for effective policies focused on prevention, protecting and supporting victims, and the prosecution of those who profit from sexual exploitation;
8. Reiterates that rape remains one of the most widespread violations of human rights and recalls that rape, defined on the basis of a lack of consent, needs to be criminalised under EU law under the existing legal basis; condemns in the strongest terms the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as a weapon of war used to terrorise civilian populations, suppress resistance and destroy communities; recalls that such acts can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, or acts contributing to genocide under international law;

9. Calls for the EU and global actors to denounce practices such as female genital mutilation, forced and underage marriage, and 'honour' violence and killings; calls for decisive action across the EU and globally to prevent the trafficking of women and girls and support victims of sexual and gender-based violence;
10. Stresses that cyberattacks, disinformation and misinformation, often used as tools of foreign interference, including during electoral periods, contribute to this trend of democratic decline; stresses the critical significance of trustworthy, independent and diverse sources of information and of quality journalism not only for transparency and accountability but also for the resilience of democratic institutions and the informed participation of citizens in public life; is therefore deeply concerned by the growing and multifaceted challenges faced by independent media, including increasing attacks on journalists and the decrease in available funding; reiterates that freedom of speech is a human right, vital for the development of a pluralistic and democratic society; condemns the increase in the censorship, silencing and harassing of journalists, HRDs and CSOs in their work through the application of so-called foreign agents laws, as well as other legislative and non-legislative measures adopted by authoritarian and illiberal regimes; notes that this behaviour includes measures encompassing strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), restrictive government policies, transnational repression, defamation campaigns, discrimination, intimidation, arbitrary detention and violence, having a long-lasting effect on their career and safety; highlights, in this regard, the role played by fact checkers in the media landscape, ensuring that the public can trust the information they receive;
11. Underlines the essential role civil society plays in a well-functioning democracy; is extremely concerned by the continuing restriction of civil society space, the growing threats to the work of HRDs and members of CSOs, as well as their families, communities and lawyers, and finds particularly concerning the increasingly sophisticated means used to persecute them; strongly condemns their arbitrary detentions and killings; deplores actions taken by governments across the world to shrink the civic space, such as through the introduction of tailored legislation aimed at restricting financing for non-governmental organisations, including funding from foreign sources, the adoption of so-called foreign agents laws and the misuse of counter-terrorism or anti-corruption laws in order to curb freedom of assembly and to suppress HRDs; denounces the crackdown on peaceful protesters and on youth- and student-led protests and organisations in the world with cases of torture and ill treatment resulting in deaths and other serious violations;
12. Condemns the obstruction of independent civil society participation in multilateral forums, for example through the instrumentalisation of government-affiliated NGOs and through intimidation and reprisals;
13. Highlights the crucial work of HRDs in advancing human rights; deplores, however, the growing attacks on HRDs; condemns the impunity with which perpetrators commit violations against HRDs both in the public and private spheres; insists on the particular threats faced by women HRDs and the lack of accountability for such acts; notes the increased sophistication of the methods employed for persecuting them within and outside their countries, including through various forms of transnational repression and threats, including through financial means, surveillance, intimidation, digital harassment, and politically motivated detention of dissidents and activists abroad;
14. Highlights the fact that autocratic and illiberal regimes are increasingly taking unlawful advantage of international financial and cybersecurity legislation, such as anti-money laundering and countering the financing of terrorism laws or Financial Action Task Force standards, to target dissenting voices and to obtain their behavioural data, also in EU territory;
15. Points out that LGBTIQ+ persons are particularly vulnerable amid war and forced displacements, facing persecution and violence; calls on the Commission and the European External Action Service (EEAS) to ensure that the EU's external aid includes protection and safeguarding measures in these situations;

16. Stresses that during conflicts and forced displacements the burden of caregiving falls disproportionately on women and girls, limiting their access to education, employment and political participation; calls for the EU's humanitarian aid to include measures to support caregivers;
17. Considers that while the use of new and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI), has the potential to considerably improve human well-being, their unrestricted or undiscerning application also poses serious threats to democracy and human rights, also bearing in mind that this transformation can be shaped by biased data and driven by algorithms that frequently reinforce discrimination; condemns the increasing misuse and abuse by authoritarian regimes of facial recognition technology, mass digital surveillance, deepfakes and disinformation campaigns, censorship of online content, and information suppression, cyberattacks, data breaches, state-sponsored online influence operations and a growing number of internet shutdowns as powerful coercive instruments; highlights that internet shutdowns are often used by authoritarian regimes to silence political dissidence and curb political freedom; notes in the absence of robust minimum human rights safeguards that relevant technologies risk being exported to autocratic systems, thereby also facilitating human rights violations in other countries;
18. Condemns the wave of opposition in various parts of the world to gender equality and women's and LGBTIQ+ rights; stresses that these trends form a threat to the fundamental principles enshrined in the Treaty on European Union;
19. Condemns in the strongest terms the increasing attacks on sexual and reproductive health and rights around the world; reaffirms that the denial of quality comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including safe and legal abortion, constitutes a form of gender-based violence;
20. Reiterates its concern over violations of the right to freedom of thought, conscience, religion, and belief, and the global rise in intolerance towards local faith actors and religious communities; deplores the political instrumentalisation of religious identities and the exclusion of religious minorities, including from political participation, as well as attacks on cultural and historical sites; stresses that freedom to choose one's religion or belief is a human right that cannot be punished; condemns, therefore, the existence and implementation of so-called apostasy laws and blasphemy laws that lead to harsh penalties, degrading treatment and, in some cases, even to death sentences;
21. Condemns the practice of commercial surrogacy, which can involve the reproductive exploitation and use of women's bodies for financial or other gain, in particular in the case of especially vulnerable women in non-EU countries; calls on the Commission to take measures to support addressing the practice of commercial surrogacy;

Multilateralism

22. Expresses deep concern over the persistent global crisis of accountability and highlights the ongoing struggle to end impunity for violations of fundamental international human rights and humanitarian law in conflicts worldwide; reaffirms the essential neutrality and vital role of humanitarian aid in all conflict and crisis situations; highlights the grave repercussions of undermining and attacking multilateral organisations, including the UN, which risks fostering a culture of impunity and weakening both trust in and the effectiveness of the UN system; calls for the EU to defend the international legal framework and to implement robust measures to ensure adherence to these laws; is deeply concerned by the fact that the work of multilateral human rights institutions and the multilateral rules-based order faces unprecedented threats and attacks; strongly deplores the decision made by some countries to withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council and their announcements that they would not participate in the Universal Periodic Review; condemns the constant attempts to undermine and discredit the UN, its Secretary-General, its Special Rapporteurs, and its agencies, including those delivering humanitarian aid, as well as the attacks on peacekeeping missions;

23. Reiterates the need for the EU and its Member States to speak with one voice at the UN and in other multilateral forums in order to effectively tackle global challenges to human rights and democracy in these forums and to support the strongest possible language in line with international human rights standards; stresses that the current multilateral order needs to fully incorporate in its architecture global actors focusing on democracy and human rights such as the EU; calls therefore for the EU and its Member States to work towards ensuring a permanent seat for the EU in multilateral forums, particularly in the UN Security Council in addition to existing Member States' seats;
24. Expresses deep concern regarding the escalating attacks on the rules-based international order by authoritarian, totalitarian and illiberal regimes, in particular through their unprovoked and unjustified aggression against peaceful neighbouring countries, as well as through actions aimed at undermining the effective functioning of United Nations bodies, including the misuse of the veto power in the UN Security Council;
25. Calls on the Member States and like-minded partners to develop a robust strategy, to intensify their efforts to counteract this alarming escalation and to send a united and strong message of support to those organisations when they are attacked or threatened; considers that the UN, its constituent bodies and other multilateral organisations require reform to effectively respond to these growing challenges and threats;
26. Notes that this departure from a multilateral approach to the global order not only poses a threat to the effective resolution of current crises, but also makes the outbreak of new crises more likely; underlines that the multilateral system, with the UN and other multilateral forums at its core, remains the most effective way of advancing efforts for peace and security, respect for human rights and addressing global challenges in a just, sustainable and principled manner; commends the role of the UN with regard to the promotion of human rights, conflict resolution and global governance, particularly in conflict zones;
27. Highlights that growing disrespect for international law and the politicisation of debates concerning international justice institutions, such as the ICJ and the ICC, pose an existential threat to the rules-based global order; expresses its deep concern about the increasing disregard for and polarisation around international humanitarian and human rights law; deplores the unprecedented threats faced by the ICC, in particular owing to the imposition of sanctions on its judges and staff; recalls that international law and the competent independent legal authorities are essential in upholding international justice, ensuring accountability and combating impunity, which are necessary preconditions of any reconciliation process and sustained peace;
28. Underlines that all EU Member States, as parties to the Rome Statute, are legally obliged to enforce ICC arrest warrants; whereas any decision to ignore these obligations or withdraw from the ICC violates the EU *acquis* and undermines the rules-based international order;
29. Reiterates the EU's strong support for the European Court of Human Rights; urges all signatory States to the European Convention on Human Rights to fully abide by the rulings of the Court;
30. Notes with concern that some countries have repeatedly attempted to embed terminologies and concepts in the Human Rights Council that ultimately lead to the relativisation of accountability; calls for the EU and its Member States to ensure that such phrasings are systematically opposed;
31. Expresses serious concern about the human rights situation in illegally occupied territories, including in EU territory, and in cases of protracted conflicts and the multiple frozen and invisible conflicts, and calls for effective measures to prevent grave human rights abuses on the ground;

Assessing the EU's toolbox for the promotion and protection of human rights and democracy around the world*EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy 2020-2027*

32. Recognises that the time frame of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy is now aligned with the EU budget cycle, which should help ensure funding for action plan priorities; recalls, however, that the mid-term review lacked clear assessment benchmarks and consequently failed to provide clear guidance for tackling shortcomings; believes that a full review of the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy should not be further delayed and that work should begin immediately on setting the parameters for an improved plan;
33. Insists that Parliament must be actively involved in the preparation of the new action plan;
34. Underlines the role of the EU's public, parliamentary and cultural diplomacy, as well as of its international cultural relations, in the promotion of human rights and democracy, and calls for the Strategic Communication and Foresight division of the EEAS to increase its efforts in this regard, for which it should be given adequate resources;

Funding of external action for human rights and democracy – proposed Global Europe instrument under the 2028-2034 MFF

35. Welcomes the human rights and democracy-related objectives in all pillars of the proposed Global Europe instrument and the proposed increase in EU funding for external action, especially considering the dramatic cuts by other major global contributors which have a direct impact on the most vulnerable populations; stresses that the EU cannot bridge the gap alone;
36. Strongly deplores, however, the deletion of the thematic programme on human rights and democracy as a flagship EU instrument in promoting and protecting human rights and democracy around the world, emphasising the necessity of integrating a human rights-based approach consistently across the EU's external action instruments to ensure coherence, and the absence of a dedicated budget and earmarking; underlines Parliament's role in the instrument's programming process and calls on the Commission and the EEAS to share all relevant information in a timely manner in order to enable Parliament to play its role accordingly;
37. Underlines the need for clear percentage targets, ring-fenced budget lines, and transparent tracking to ensure funds effectively address global challenges and support vulnerable populations; reiterates the prohibition on allocating EU funds to activities that are contrary to EU fundamental values, such as terrorism or extremism;
38. Deplores the absence of a transparent and enforceable human rights and democracy conditionality for cooperation with non-EU countries, which would be an effective tool to give tangible effect to the EU's commitment to the promotion of human rights worldwide;

EU Special Representative (EUSR) for Human Rights

39. Continues to regard the EUSR for Human Rights as an essential voice of the EU's external human rights policy, contributing to its visibility and coherence in close cooperation and coordination with all EU bodies;

EU Special Envoy for the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU

40. Takes note of the fact that the post of the EU Special Envoy for the promotion of freedom of religion or belief outside the EU has remained vacant for more than a year; highlights the need to ensure close cooperation with the EUSR for Human Rights and the Council Working Party on Human Rights;

EU trade and international agreements with non-EU countries

41. Emphasises the crucial role of international agreements, including association and trade agreements, and of instruments such as the generalised scheme of preferences (GSP) and GSP+ for placing human rights and democratic standards at the core of the EU's relations with non-EU countries, for encouraging and monitoring compliance with such standards and for implementing human rights conditionality in the EU's external policy; reiterates its call to integrate human rights assessments and include robust clauses on human rights in relevant agreements between the EU and non-EU countries; underlines the importance of addressing gender inequality and promoting women's rights through these agreements, including by supporting women's participation in the economy and protecting them from discrimination and exploitation;
42. Insists that the rights of indigenous peoples, as stated in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, must be consistently respected in EU agreements, development projects, and corporate activities affecting their lands or resources; emphasises the importance of upholding indigenous rights for sustainable development, climate action, and biodiversity conservation;
43. Recalls the responsibility of businesses in ensuring that their operations and supply chains are not implicated in human rights abuses; underlines the need to close legal and regulatory loopholes that could be exploited by businesses at the expense of human rights and the environment; reiterates its strong support for the UN open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights for a legally binding instrument on business and human rights;

EU human rights dialogues

44. Notes that 35 human rights dialogues and consultations were organised in 2024; considers that these dialogues continue to be an important instrument in advancing human rights and democracy, but regrets that they are often seen as a free-standing instrument rather than a key element of sustained engagement on human rights in relations with non-EU countries and regions; calls for the enhanced and meaningful involvement of civil society in the dialogues; stresses that genuine CSOs must not be impeded from participating in human rights dialogues and that any dialogue must include them without any limitations; considers that there is space for enhancing Parliament's role more systematically in the dialogue process; reiterates the need to raise individual cases, in particular those highlighted by Parliament in its resolutions, and ensure adequate follow-up; takes note of the fact that several human rights dialogues continue not to be held in EU headquarters;

EU sanctions instruments and tools, including the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (GHRSR – Magnitsky Act)

45. Reiterates its support for increasing the use of the GHRSR, along with other ad hoc sanctions frameworks, as a key political EU policy tool promoting the rule of law, democracy and human rights, which complements other judicial instruments; calls for the EU and its Member States to expand the scope of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime (EU Magnitsky Act), to include acts of corruption – as already requested several times by Parliament – and systematic listings for perpetrators of transnational repression, including those targeting diaspora communities; recalls, however, the limitations and slowness of the current decision-making system for these instruments' activation and the loopholes in enforcement mechanisms that allow circumvention; reiterates its call for the introduction of qualified majority voting for decisions on the GHRSR; calls for an equal, principled and complete enforcement of sanctions and for circumventions to be tackled;

EU support for HRDs

46. Welcomes the fact that, in 2024, the Human Rights Defenders Mechanism, funded under the Human Rights and Democracy thematic programme of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, supported 10 050 HRDs considered high-risk, 51 % of whom were women, and provided support to more than 700 journalists at risk in 60 countries over the same period;

47. Regrets that some mechanisms to protect HRDs, such as ProtectDefenders, are insufficiently resourced to meet the need and calls for the EU and the Member States to strengthen budgetary support, ensuring flexible, accessible and long-term funding to enable HRDs to continue their vital work amid increasing repression;
48. Underscores the critical role of EU delegations and Member State representations in observing trials, conducting visits in detention and supporting the families and lawyers of persecuted HRDs;
49. Welcomes the 2024 update of the EU Visa Code Handbook, aimed at clarifying for the Member States the possibilities of flexibly handling HRD cases to speed up short-stay visa applications for those at risk;
50. Highlights the valuable role of the Sakharov Prize Community, including through the Sakharov Fellowship programme, in contributing to a better understanding of the phenomenon of repression against HRDs, its various implications and possible ways to tackle it, including at transnational level; calls for further strengthening of the Sakharov Prize community as a platform for direct experience in monitoring violations, raising awareness and mobilising international networks;

EU actions at multilateral level for upholding the global rules-based order

51. Welcomes EU efforts in sponsoring or supporting resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council and UN General Assembly; is concerned that recent decisions by non-EU countries to scale back funding for the Human Rights Council and the UN system as a whole already have tangible implications for their ability to carry out their mission;
52. Welcomes the fact that the Council of Europe has been at the forefront of addressing concerns and advancing the setting of global norms and standards in several areas related to human rights, such as gender-based violence, academic freedom, the protection of lawyers and journalists, AI and human rights;
53. Is deeply concerned that the ICC, its officials, and cooperating partners face threats or attacks; reaffirms its firm support for the ICJ and the ICC as essential, independent and impartial judicial bodies; welcomes the EU's continued financial support of the ICC at a particularly challenging time for international justice; deplores the persistent failure to activate the EU blocking statute to shield the ICC from the extraterritorial effects of sanctions;

Team Europe approach and democracy support

54. Recognises the value of aligning approaches with human rights protection and promotion across all EU institutions, bodies and Member States' representations engaged in external action, first and foremost across Member States' embassies and EU delegations in non-EU countries, but also of making use of Parliament's full potential; stresses that flexible and coordinated approaches should remain inclusive to enable the EU institutional system of checks and balances to operate fully; emphasises that Parliament plays a strong role in upholding EU values and human rights, for instance through parliamentary diplomacy, interparliamentary dialogues and resolutions, promoting mediation and encouraging a culture of dialogue and compromise, especially among young political leaders, and empowering women parliamentarians, HRDs and representatives from civil society and independent media; reiterates its call on the Commission to continue and expand its activities in these areas by increasing support for EU bodies; takes note of the ongoing work of the Team Europe Democracy initiative in several countries; considers that enhanced collaboration between Parliament's Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group, the relevant Commission Directorates-General and the EEAS would greatly contribute to democracy support activities in non-EU countries;

Recommendations

55. Calls for the EU to use the tools at its disposal to counter the growing challenges to multilateralism so as to ensure that the work of international institutions continues to be respected; calls for the EU and its Member States to step up their support for the work of the UN and all its agencies, both politically and financially, including in its reform,

to ensure that it is fit for purpose, to push back against the influence of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes and to ensure the continuation of multilateralism as the basis of global governance; calls for the EU to expand its own support and funding efforts as a counterbalance for politically motivated pressure and as a safeguard for independent procedures; reiterates the need for the EU and its Member States to speak with one voice in multilateral forums; calls for EU delegations to play a stronger role in multilateral forums, for which they should be appropriately resourced;

56. Calls for the EUSR's work to be supported with increased resources and better coordination with EU delegations around the world, highlighting that limited transparency and visibility – such as the absence of public reporting on country visits, the work programme and priorities, or the lack of a dedicated website – may hinder public scrutiny and accountability; deplores, despite continuous calls, Parliament's exclusion from the process of selecting the EUSR and calls for this practice to be revised;
57. Calls on the Commission to ensure the timely appointment of the EU Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief; underlines the importance of providing the Special Envoy with adequate continuity, resources and visibility to effectively promote freedom of religion or belief worldwide; stresses that regular reporting to the European Parliament would further strengthen transparency and cooperation in this field;
58. Calls for the abolition of apostasy laws and blasphemy laws; calls for the EU and its Member States to intensify efforts to protect freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, raise the issue in UN forums, and consolidate reports from EU delegations on the matter; calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EEAS and the Commission to systematically raise the case of the persecution of religious minorities in political and human rights dialogues and to ensure full respect for freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief; invites the Council to make use of the EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime against individuals and entities responsible for serious freedom of religion or belief violations; requests that the EEAS identify priority countries for EU action on freedom of religion or belief and to report annually to Parliament on progress;
59. Urges all EU Member States, as States Parties to the UN Charter, the Rome Statute and the European Convention on Human Rights, to fully abide by rulings of the competent international courts including the ECtHR; calls for the EU to urge non-EU countries, including its major partners and candidate and potential candidate countries, to become States Parties to the Rome Statute; calls for the EU and its Member States to continue and intensify their support for the ICC with the necessary means, including resources and political backing; urges all the Member States to respect and uphold the actions and decisions of all organs of the ICC, including by enforcing ICC arrest warrants; demands the protection of the ICC, its officials and those cooperating with it from threats and attacks and, in that sense, reiterates its call on the Commission to urgently activate the blocking statute to protect the ICC from the consequences of sanctions and enable its continued operation in full independence; calls on the Member States to apply universal jurisdiction in the fight against impunity;
60. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to adopt a new Gender Action Plan post-2027 that will address the need for extra support for gender equality and women's rights and that will specifically tackle gender-based violence and the need for a gender-sensitive approach to humanitarian aid;
61. Calls for the EU and its Member States to propose the inclusion of 'gender apartheid' as a crime against humanity in order to hold those responsible for this crime accountable; calls for strong support for the gender apartheid definition proposed by the UN working group on discrimination against women and girls;
62. Calls for the protection of civilians at all times during armed conflicts and for the creation of humanitarian corridors, when necessary, in order to allow civilians to escape conflicts, and strongly condemns any attacks on civilians; calls for more effective protection of journalists and human rights defenders during armed conflicts, as they are particularly targeted for their work in documenting human rights abuses; emphasises that mothers and children are at an increased risk of starvation and malnutrition;

63. Calls for the participation of women and men with disabilities to be taken into account in the design of safe and accessible infrastructure during reconstruction processes following armed conflicts or natural disasters;
64. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to establish clear indicators and timelines in the post-2027 EU action plan on human rights and democracy to measure success, strengthen coherence between the EU's internal and external actions and specify better connections between priorities as enunciated in the action plan and narrower benchmarks;
65. Calls on the Commission and the EEAS to involve civil society more inclusively and to take better account of the results of consultations when developing and implementing its external human rights policy, including consultations with local actors who are closest to the implementation level;
66. Calls for a clearly earmarked budget for human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the future MFF, with clear gender equality targets that have adequate funding support for the development of democratic structures and the growth of free media, including in neighbouring countries; stresses that the EU budget also needs to be protected in its external dimension as it provides crucial leverage to achieve higher compliance with human rights and democratic standards by partner countries; calls, therefore, for enforceable human rights and robust democracy clauses to be introduced in the new Global Europe instrument for funding partner non-EU countries; calls for an operational conditionality framework that applies, inter alia, to macro-financial assistance, trade preferences and visa facilitation, with clear benchmarks and enforceable legal mechanisms to ensure compliance, including suspension clauses in cases of persistent violations;
67. Insists that non-EU countries receiving EU support in the fields of human rights, the rule of law, or civil society development must establish independent national human rights institutions, such as ombudsperson offices, in line with the Paris Principles; stresses that the presence of such institutions should be a prerequisite for funding eligibility;
68. Calls on its EU institutional partners to explore new avenues to improve decision-making, including qualified majority voting, and, when more flexible approaches are employed, such as the Team Europe approach, to ensure that human rights are sufficiently guaranteed;
69. Calls for human rights dialogues to be reinforced through clear benchmarks and deliverables so that progress can be clearly delineated and assessed during each respective round of dialogue; calls for the systematic and meaningful involvement of civil society actors in human rights dialogues and follow-up;
70. Calls for increased visibility for these dialogues and their outcomes, including the publication of joint press statements, and for these dialogues to be results-oriented or based on clear benchmarks enabling effective monitoring, including ex ante and ex post consultation with genuine civil society organisations;
71. Calls for enhanced collaboration with Parliament in the deliberation process leading up to the dialogues; stresses, in addition, the need for the EU to continue applying pressure for the dialogues to be held at EU headquarters; considers that civil society and national human rights institutions should have a distinct role in monitoring the progress of the implementation of these targets;
72. Calls for the EU to pursue the establishment of European and international instruments to guarantee access to justice and effective remedies for people affected by corporate human rights abuses; calls for the effective and thorough implementation of current EU rules on responsible corporate behaviour regarding human, labour and environmental rights such as the EU legislation on due diligence; stresses the need to establish EU policies and mechanisms capable of effectively reconciling the requirements of the sustainable transition with respect for the livelihoods of local communities; calls for the EU to promote and protect local communities and indigenous people's rights in its foreign policy;

73. Calls for the EU to firmly commit to the implementation of the Paris Agreement and to enhance international climate cooperation; stresses the importance of addressing the implications of climate change for peace and security at the highest level;
74. Calls for the EU to assess the effectiveness of the toolbox for addressing disinformation campaigns against the EU, particularly in countries that receive significant EU humanitarian and development assistance and in candidate countries for EU membership; calls urgently for the EU to back trustworthy media and information outlets that promote the accountability of authorities and support democratic transitions, while stressing the need to preserve the principles of pluralism, transparency and independence;
75. Welcomes the directive designed to shield journalists and HRDs from abusive legal actions and SLAPPs; encourages lawmakers in non-EU countries to develop legislation with the same goal, as part of broader efforts to promote and protect media freedom and pluralism; requests that attacks on media freedom, as well as the persistent and systematic erosion of the right to information, be taken into account in the EU's monitoring of the compliance of international agreements;
76. Underlines the importance of tackling gender disinformation and online harassment targeting women active in politics, journalism and civil society, which aim to silence dissent, undermine democratic participation and spread anti-EU narratives; stresses that the instrument should include binding obligations to prevent, mitigate and remedy gender-specific human-rights impacts; calls for proportionate and effective countermeasures and improved monitoring tools to prevent, expose and respond to such phenomena, while safeguarding fundamental rights and freedom of expression; calls for dedicated support and protection measures to ensure the safety of women journalists, activists and politicians online and offline;
77. Calls for the promotion of academic freedom as a key component of open and democratic societies;
78. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to recognise transnational repression as a specific human rights threat, establish systems to track, document and address it, provide training and resources to law enforcement, and ensure accountability for perpetrators, including officials and agents of non-EU countries and local enablers; stresses that EU responses should integrate these trends into human rights guidelines and international cooperation;
79. Calls for the EU and its Member States to continue and enhance their support for human rights defenders and to adopt adequate regulatory safeguards in the EU to combat transnational repression;
80. Recalls that the leadership of the EU with regard to AI and digital diplomacy is crucial to promote models that ensure high human right standards, as well as for its relevance and resilience; calls, in this regard, for the EU to scale up its digital and AI diplomacy, to enforce the Digital Services Act ⁽⁹⁾ and ensure that technology companies and social media platforms comply with human rights obligations and address transnational repression, including against HRDs; calls for the EU and its Member States to ensure that actors that are enabling digital transnational repression, particularly in the technology sector, are held accountable;
81. Reiterates the importance of the EU Election Observation Missions for the independent and impartial evaluation of the electoral processes they monitor, given the growing interference by some states in other countries' elections through hybrid tactics including the use of AI; calls on the EEAS and the Commission to analyse and report to Parliament on their initiatives to tackle the challenges posed by AI in electoral processes; calls for the protection of international electoral observers; calls for follow-up to the adoption and implementation of the recommendations of

⁽⁹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act) (OJ L 277, 27.10.2022, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj>).

these electoral observation missions in non-EU countries, and for them to be included as a key element in the framework of relations between the EU and the non-EU country in question; highlights Parliament's contribution to these missions as an essential dimension of its external action, as well as to developing and enhancing their methodology; notes that countries are increasingly refusing to invite the EU to observe their elections and calls on the EEAS to address this situation; welcomes the work of the European Endowment for Democracy and reiterates the need to keep strengthening its work and resources; calls for further EU financial support to the organisation of electoral missions;

82. Calls for strengthened efforts to guarantee the public participation of minorities, as well as to increase the representation of women and young people in electoral processes;
83. Reiterates its condemnation of all forms of racism, intolerance, antisemitism, Islamophobia, persecution of Christians, xenophobia and discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, social class, disability, caste, religion, belief, age, sexual orientation or gender identity; calls for the adoption or the strengthening of mechanisms for reporting discriminatory behaviours, as well as access to effective legal remedies, to help end the impunity of those who engage in such acts;
84. Regrets that, while Christianity remains the most persecuted religion in the world today, with more than 380 million people affected, there is no European coordinator responsible for combating Christianophobia, even though a coordinator has been appointed to combat Islamophobia;
85. Reiterates its call on the Council to adopt an ambitious mandate for the EU to engage in the ongoing negotiations on a legally binding UN instrument to hold companies accountable for their human rights violations as soon as possible; calls for the EU to ensure the alignment of EU and national legislation with international human rights standards and to strengthen collaboration with other regions and global organisations;
86. Calls for the systematic implementation of ex ante and ex post human rights assessments and for the inclusion of robust enforceable clauses on human rights in agreements between the EU and non-EU countries, supported by a clear set of benchmarks and procedures to be followed in the event of violations; calls on the Commission and the EEAS to ensure that the human rights clauses in current international agreements are actively monitored and effectively enforced, including with suspension, and to improve their communication with Parliament concerning considerations and decisions regarding this enforcement; reiterates that in the event of persistent breaches of human rights clauses by its partner countries, including those in the GSP+ scheme, the EU should react swiftly and decisively, including by suspending the agreements in question if other options prove ineffective;
87. Calls for the creation of a complaint-handling portal, within the framework of EU trade and financial instruments, possibly through the adaptation of the Commission's Single Entry Point to allow for complaints to be submitted regarding failures to comply with human rights clauses; stresses that this portal should be accessible, citizen-friendly and transparent, and open to citizens of non-EU countries;
88. Encourages careful monitoring and assessment of the capacity of EU delegations so as to ensure that they all have a designated point of contact for cases of human rights violations with sufficient resources to enable an effective and timely response; recommends also that EU delegation staff are regularly trained on the current EU guidelines relating to human rights specific issues; demands that Member States' embassies engage in the defence and promotion of human rights in non-EU countries in a more vocal way, actively supporting the role of EU delegations;
89. Highlights that in many regions of the world, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) are often the driving force of local economies, with an increasing number of women running them; underlines that MSMEs account for 90 % of businesses, 60 % to 70 % of employment and 50 % of gross domestic product worldwide; highlights the importance of MSMEs in their contribution to the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, namely those on the eradication of poverty and decent working conditions for all;

90. Reiterates its call to prioritise the fight against corruption as a factor enabling attacks on human rights and democracy; urges the Council to finally adopt an anti-corruption sanctions regime, which has been a long-standing priority of Parliament;
91. Calls for the EU to intensify diplomatic engagement with countries that continue to apply the death penalty, which is incompatible with the right to life and with the prohibition of torture, encouraging dialogue and cooperation on human rights issues and providing support for the development of judicial reforms that could lead towards its abolition;
92. Calls for the EU to update the scope of the Anti-torture Regulation ⁽¹⁰⁾ to reflect changes in the international security equipment market, changes in use and misuse of law enforcement equipment, as well as emerging challenges, notably extra-custodial torture and ill treatment during the repression of peaceful protests; calls for the EU to promote compliance with the Geneva Convention on Prisoners of War;
93. Calls for reinforcing EU initiatives to combat human trafficking focusing on early identification, victim-centred protection (including children), and financial disruption of networks;
94. Underscores that to harness the full potential of the EU Guidelines on HRDs thorough implementation, as well as comprehensive revision, is needed to address the increasing level of sophistication of the persecution and harassment of HRDs, including digital threats and transnational repression;
95. Calls for the extended use of the EU GHRSR – EU Magnitsky Act to sanction individuals who persecute or harass HRDs, including environmental and land rights defenders;



96. 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 European Union Special Representative for Human Rights, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Secretary-General, the President of the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the President of the United Nations Human Rights Council, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the European Union Heads of Delegation.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Regulation (EU) 2019/125 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (OJ L 30, 31.1.2019, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2019/125/oj>).