

European Parliament

2019-2024



Plenary sitting

14.12.2022.

RC - BXXXX

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 132 (2) of the Rules of Procedure,

on **Commission statement on Suspicions of corruption from Qatar and the broader need for transparency and accountability in the European institutions,**

Jeroen Lenaers, Sven Simon and David McAllister

on behalf of the EPP Group

Birgit Sippel

on behalf of the S&D Group

Sophie in 't Veld

on behalf of the Renew Group

Terry Reintke

on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

Jacek Saryusz-Wolski

on behalf of the ECR Group

Manon Aubry

on behalf of the Left Group

European Parliament resolution on suspicions of corruption from Qatar and the broader need for transparency and accountability in the European institutions

(2022/3012(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 27 April 2021 on the conclusion of an inter-institutional agreement between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register;
 - having regard to its resolution of 16 September 2021 on strengthening transparency and integrity in the EU institutions by setting up an independent EU ethics body (2020/2133(INI));
 - having regard to the legal principle of the presumption of innocence;
 - having regard to its resolution of 9 March 2022 on foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation (2020/2268(INI));
 - having regard to Rule 10, 11, 132 (2) and (4) of its Rules of Procedure;
- A. whereas the Belgian federal prosecutor's office has opened an ongoing investigation regarding suspicions of money-laundering, corruption and participation in a criminal organisation; whereas several arrests and searches took place from the 9 of December 2022 onwards, affecting current as well as former Members of the European Parliament, and staff;
- B. whereas several suspects have already been charged with money-laundering, corruption and participation in a criminal organisation; whereas considerable amounts of money in the possession of suspects have been seized by police forces following the search of homes;
- C. whereas trust in Parliament's integrity and the rule of law is paramount for the functioning of European democracy; Whereas it is key to ensure that democratic processes are not captured by private and external interests and that citizens' rights are fully respected;
- D. whereas influencing of decision making in Parliament by interest representatives by way of arguments is a vital part of European democracy; whereas, on the other hand, inappropriate means of influencing, bribery and other criminal offences are unacceptable;
- E. whereas the Parliament has adopted its position calling for an ambitious Ethics Body in its resolution, as adopted on 16 September 2021;

- F. whereas the Directive (EU) 2019/1937 protects whistleblowers when, under specific circumstances, they directly disclose wrongdoing publicly;
- G. whereas the transparency register is a central piece of the ethical framework and the transparency of the European institutions;
- H. whereas the NGO “Fight Impunity” is not registered in the Transparency Register as of the date of this resolution;
1. Is appalled and expresses serious concern about the alleged acts of corruption, money laundering and participation in a criminal organisation of members, former members and staff of the Parliament in exchange for influence over Parliament’s decisions; supports the full cooperation of the European Parliament with the ongoing criminal investigation;
 2. Denounces in the strongest terms the alleged attempts by Qatar to influence Members, former Members and staff of the European Parliament through acts of corruption which constitute serious foreign interference in the EU's democratic processes;
 3. Underlines that the gravity and magnitude of the current investigations require the European Parliament and the EU institutions to react with unequivocal unity and unwavering resolve;
 4. Calls for a special committee tasked with identifying potential flaws in the European Parliament’s framework of rules on transparency, integrity and corruption and make proposals for reforms building on the work of the AFCO committee and best practices in other Parliaments;
 5. Commits to set up an inquiry committee on the basis of Art 226 TFEU, following the outcome of the criminal investigations and possible court proceedings, to investigate cases of corruption and improper actions by third countries seeking to buy influence in the European Parliament;
 6. Welcomes the termination of office of member Eva KAILI from her position as Vice-President, as provided by Rule 21 of the Rules of Procedures (RoP);
 7. Demands that a dedicated vice-president be in charge of integrity and fighting corruption and foreign interference in the Parliament;
 8. Urges the Commission to finally come forward with a proposal to set up the Ethics Body in line with the resolution by the Parliament, as adopted on 19 September 2021;
 9. Urgently calls for the suspension access badges of Qatari interests representatives in line with Rule 123 of the Rules of Procedures until the judicial investigations provide relevant information and clarification;
 10. Believes that the EU Transparency Register should be strengthened, in budget and personnel, so that it is able to verify the information provided by the applicants and

registrants more thoroughly; believes furthermore that its scope should be extended to include representatives of third countries;

11. Emphasises that proper regulation and monitoring of friendship groups is a prerequisite for their continuous existence in Parliament; instructs the Questors to implement the existing rules and to develop and maintain an accessible and up-to-date register of friendship groups and declarations;
12. Recommends the revision of the Staff regulation, especially article 22c, in order to align it with the standards of the Whistleblowers Directive;
13. Emphasises the role of the EPPO, Eurojust, Europol and OLAF in the fight against corruption and calls for further strengthening the capacities and cooperation of EPPO and OLAF; Calls for common anti-corruption rules applicable to members and staff of EU bodies;
14. Suspends all work on legislative files relating to Qatar, particularly concerning visa liberalisation, and planned visits, until suspicions have been confirmed or dismissed;
15. Instructs its President to send 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 government and parliament of the State of Qatar.