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*Plenary sitting*

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16.9.2014

B8-0086/2014

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Burundi, in particular the case of Pierre Claver Mbonimpa (2014/2833(RSP))

**Charles Tannock, Jan Zahradil, Ryszard Czarnecki**  
on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Burundi, in particular the case of Pierre Claver Mbonimpa (2014/2833(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the 1948 United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders of 09 December 1988,
- having regard to the Second Revision of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement of 11 March 2010, in particular Article 20(2) thereof,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on Burundi,
- having regard to the Statement on 10 June 2014 of the EEAS Spokesperson on the political situation in Burundi<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the Statement on Wednesday, 9 July 2014, of Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Simonovic at the Burundi Configuration of Peacebuilding Fund,
- having regard to the Press Release on 14 July 2014 of the African Commission for Human and Peoples' Rights on the detention of the human rights defenders Mr Pierre Claver Mbonimpa<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to Council Conclusions on the Great Lakes Region of 22 July 2014, in particular point 7 thereof,
- having regard to the Statement of 10 September 2014 of the European Union in situ,<sup>3</sup>
- having regard to Rule 135(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

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<sup>1</sup> The Statement in French is entitled "Déclaration du porte-parole sur la situation politique au Burundi" and is available at [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140610\\_01\\_fr.pdf](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/statements/docs/2014/140610_01_fr.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The Press release in French is entitled "Communiqué de Presse sur le maintien en détention du défenseur des droits de l'homme Monsieur Pierre Claver Mbonimpa".

<sup>3</sup> The Statement in French is entitled "Déclaration locale de l'Union européenne sur la situation du président de l'Association pour la protection des droits humains et des personnes détenues (APRODH), Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, et sur le cas des membres du parti Mouvement pour la Solidarité et la Démocratie" and available at [http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burundi/documents/press\\_corner/2014/declaration\\_10092014\\_fr.pdf](http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/burundi/documents/press_corner/2014/declaration_10092014_fr.pdf)

- A. whereas Mr Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, 66, a prominent human rights activist in Burundi, was arrested on 15 May 2014 in the capital city Bujumbura, and jailed without a trial for more than a month at the Mpimba prison,
- B. whereas Mr Mbonimpa, president and founder of the Association for the Protection of Human Rights and Detained Persons (APRODH), is a former police officer, and a prisoner himself in the 1990s,
- C. whereas Mr Mbonimpa was charged by the state Prosecutor with inciting public disobedience and endangering internal and external state security for alleged remarks made on the Burundian radio station 'Radio Publique Africaine (RPA)' on 06 May 2014,
- D. whereas the EU delegation in Bujumbura took note on 10 September 2014 of Mr Mbonimpa's transfer to a hospital and is concerned by the deterioration of his health condition;
- E. whereas serious questions arise as to whether Mr Mbonimpa's allegations about young Burundians being turned into soldiers and sent to military training in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo constitute legitimate legal grounds for his imprisonment,
- F. whereas Mr Mbonimpa has been the long-term target of repeated government-orchestrated threats and harassment such as the latest summonses to appear before the Burundian judicial police on May 7th and 12th this year that he attended to answers questions about his alleged statements,
- G. whereas Mr Mbonimpa's work in the defence of democracy and human rights in Burundi in more than the past two decades, has earned him several international awards and widespread recognition domestically and beyond,
- H. whereas on 08 March 2014 dozens of opposition party members of the Movement for Solidarity and Democracy (MSD), part of the Alliance for Democratic Change (ADC), were imprisoned, after a party meeting was interrupted by Burundi's police, which implied that the party was stirring rebellion,
- I. whereas the EU is increasingly concerned by the manifest oppression through constant intimidation, harassment, politically-motivated killings of human rights defenders, journalists, opposition leaders, witnesses and critics of abuses in Burundi, since President Pierre Nkurunziza's re-election in 2010,
- J. whereas Burundi is currently facing its worst political crisis since it emerged from a 12-year civil war in 2005, posing once again threats not only to the country's internal stability, but also to that of its neighbors in an already volatile region of the African continent,

1. Calls on Burundi's public authorities to release Mr Mbonimpa from detention without delay, and to ensure that all charges pressed against him be reviewed in a fair trial;
2. Insists that during his current hospitalisation, Mr Mbonimpa's right to appropriate medical care be firmly uphold in accordance with Burundi's laws and the country's international commitments on Human Rights;
3. Calls on the government of Burundi to refrain from using violence against civilians participating in peaceful public protests and media campaigns in support of Mr Mbonimpa, especially the other members of APRODH; reminds the Burundian authorities of their duty to respect the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, and to end impunity of all perpetrators of abuses against them and their families;
4. Is also preoccupied by the living conditions of 52 other detainees who were sentenced to jail after a trial on 08 March 2014, amongst which dozens of members of the MSD opposition party, and reminds that the right of each of these persons to fair trial, presumption of innocence and independent and impartial judicial process shall be fully respected;
5. Condemns all acts of persistent oppression of human rights activists, journalists, political opponents, victims and witnesses of Human Rights abuses in Burundi, and urges the government of Burundi to take all necessary measures to put an end to politically motivated violence that has been imputed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Simonovic, amongst other youth movements linked to political parties, to the ruling CNDD-FDD's youth association known as the Imbonerakure, often with the alleged collusion of local authorities and the police,
6. Fully subscribes to Council's conclusions on the Great Lakes Region of 22 July 2014, in particular point 7 thereof, which reaffirms that the upcoming 2015 elections in Burundi are a crucial opportunity to consolidate progress made in the post-war era, but is increasingly concerned about the constraints on political space, freedom of medias, and civil liberties that are being witnessed on the ground by civil society organisations and reported by international press;
7. Reiterates in this context the importance of respecting the Code of Conduct in electoral matters (Code de bonne conduite en matière électorale) and the UN-brokered election roadmap which was signed by political actors in 2013, and fully supports the activities of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) to prevent further increase in political violence in the run up to the 2015 elections and help restore long-term security and peace;
8. Stresses the need for combined efforts and coherent institutional engagement by the EEAS and the European Commission to improving the Human Rights situation in Burundi, and to ensuring that sufficient EU development funding allocated to Burundi is earmarked for judicial and police reforms, so that the country's records in these areas revert to a positive trend;

9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the African Union, the UN Secretary-General, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Government and Parliament of Burundi.