



Plenary sitting

B8-0365/2018

11.9.2018

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 Uganda, arrest of parliamentarians from the opposition
(2018/2840(RSP))

**Maria Heubuch, Judith Sargentini, Michèle Rivasi, Barbara Lochbihler,
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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Fabio Massimo Castaldo, Ignazio Corrao, Piernicola Pedicini

**European Parliament resolution on Uganda, arrest of parliamentarians from the opposition
(2018/2840(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Uganda,
 - having regard to the joint local statement from the European Union Delegation, the Heads of Mission of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and UK, and the Heads of Mission of Norway and Iceland on Arua Municipality by-election of 17 August 2018,
 - having regard to the statement by the European Union Delegation in Uganda on Freedom of Expression of 21 September 2017,
 - having regard to the statement from the Ugandan Human Rights Commission on emerging human rights issues in the country following the Arua Municipality by-election held on Wednesday 15th August 2018,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, to which Uganda is a signatory,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human Rights,
 - having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (‘Cotonou Agreement’)
 - having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda,
 - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. Whereas following an alleged stoning of the the presidential convoy in the margin of campaign rallies for the Arua Municipality by-election, on 13 August 2018, Ugandan police and military arrested six opposition members of parliament, at least two journalists, and 28 other people and shot to death the driver of popular MP Robert Kyagulanyi, Yasiin Kawuma,
- B. whereas serious and credible allegations have been made, inter alia by the Ugandan Human Rights Commission, stating that the arrested were beaten and tortured by security forces; whereas at least six people who remain detained have serious injuries,
- C. whereas the arrests resulted in protests in the capital Kampala and in Mityana, which were violently repressed by riot police, leading to the killing of another person, Samuel Ssekiziyivu, and several injured protestors,
- D. whereas the police arrested several journalists as they reported live from the places the

protests and killings took place and charged them with malicious damage to property and incitement of violence; whereas the journalists accused the security forces of tying them up and beating them; whereas soldiers took the equipment of a prominent Reuters photojournalist,

- E. whereas military prosecutors charged MP Kyagulanyi with unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition before a military court in Gulu, after he had been held incommunicado for three days,
 - F. Whereas the prosecution of civilians before military courts is a standard procedure in Uganda in case of allegations of gun crime; whereas the African Commission has called on Uganda in 2006 and 2009 to stop this practice,
 - G. Whereas NGOs and civil society organisations are subject to more restrictions after a new NGO Act was adopted in January 2017,
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- 1. Is appalled by the violent repression from Ugandan security forces against peaceful protesters, the arrests of members of parliament and the allegations of torture applied by Ugandan soldiers,
 - 2. Considers the arrest of members of Parliament as a serious violation of their right to immunity and thereby an attack on the independence of the Ugandan Parliament,
 - 3. Deplores the ongoing use of security forces by the Ugandan ruling forces to stifle opposition through intimidation, beatings, detentions and prosecutions on trumped-up charges,
 - 4. Urges Ugandan authorities to prosecute individually the security officers who allegedly tortured the arrested members of parliament and other people in the Arua rallies and to ensure adequate compensation and reparation to the victims for injury and losses suffered in the process;
 - 5. Calls for investigating and instituting criminal proceeding against police officers suspected to have shot dead Yasin Kawuma in Arua and Samuel Ssekiziyivu in Mityana in August,
 - 6. Calls for an immediate release of all the suspects who have been detained illegally following the Arua rallies and respect and fulfil the rights of those currently in detention;
 - 7. Recalls the right to peaceful assembly guaranteed by the Ugandan constitution and strongly regrets that Ugandan security forces regularly deny this right through intimidation and violent repression against protestors; calls on Ugandan police to desist from the use of live bullets and other unorthodox weapons on unarmed demonstrators and non-violent suspects;
 - 8. Appeals at the same time to protesters to be law-abiding and to exercise their rights

and freedoms within the law,

9. Highlights the right to freedom of expression, including media freedom, and calls in this context on Ugandan security forces to stop harassing journalists reporting on protests; requests to expedite the prosecution of officers of the Uganda Police Force and the Ugandan army who assaulted, tortured and damaged the property of journalists as they covered the Arua by-elections and the recent demonstrations,
10. Regrets the continued existence of Ugandan laws that violate rights to freedom of expression, and to peaceful assembly and association, like the laws on criminal defamation; calls on the Ugandan government to bring such legislation in line with international standards as requested by the United Nations Human Rights' Council,
11. Commends the work accomplished by the Ugandan Human Rights Commission following the arrests, killings and torture related to the Arua by-election, including reporting, visits to detention centers, investigating whereabouts of missed persons, interventions for guaranteeing the rights of prisoners, medical treatment, family visits etc.
12. Calls on the EU to take advantage of the political leverage provided by development aid programmes, namely budget support programmes, to enhance the defence and promotion of human rights in Uganda;
13. 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 President of the Republic of Uganda, the Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament and the African Union and its institutions.