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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0110/2019**

12.2.2019

## **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 Zimbabwe  
(2019/2563(RSP))

**Geoffrey Van Orden, Charles Tannock, Karol Karski, Notis Marias, Ruža Tomašić, Jana Žitňanská, Pirkko Ruohonen-Lerner, Ryszard Czarnecki, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Branislav Škripek, Valdemar Tomaševski, Monica Macovei**

on behalf of the ECR Group

**B8-0110/2019**

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Zimbabwe  
(2019/2563(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Zimbabwe;
- having regard to the statement by the European External Action Service on violence in Zimbabwe of 17 January 2019;
- having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, notably sections 232, 233, 242 and 243;
- having regard to the Cotonou Agreement;
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;
- having regard to the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights of 1966;
- having regard to Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/288 of 17 February 2017 amending Decision 2011/101/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against certain individuals in Zimbabwe;
- having regard to the Council conclusions on Zimbabwe of 22 January 2018;
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of June 1981, which Zimbabwe has ratified;
- having regard to the statement of the President of Zimbabwe, Emmerson Mnangagwa, on his inauguration on 24 November 2017;
- having regard to the Universal Periodic Review on Zimbabwe, conducted by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2016;
- having regard to the Joint Communiqué issued following the EU-African Union Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meeting on 21-22 January 2019;
- having regard to the outcome of the Presidential and parliamentary elections, held in Zimbabwe on 30 July 2018;
- having regard to the conclusions of the European Union's election observation mission to Zimbabwe of July 2018;
- having regard to a report by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum of 18 January on the impact of recent violence in the country;
- having regard to the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission monitoring report into the

protests and violence of January 2019;

- having regard to the statement from the Office of the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights on the situation in Zimbabwe of 18 January 2019;

- having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure;

A. whereas Zimbabwe was once the bread basket of southern Africa but since 2000 has struggled to feed its own people due to severe droughts, rapid economic decline, corruption, autocratic government, and a catastrophic land reform programme which led to sharp falls in food production;

B. whereas, since taking office in 2017, President Emmerson Mnangagwa has introduced a raft of measures aimed at stimulating economic growth but foreign currency shortages have led to large-scale business closures and the shortage of imported commodities including fuel;

C. whereas on taking his oath of office in Harare on 26 August 2018, President Emmerson Mnangagwa, promised a brighter, shared future for all Zimbabweans, transcending party lines, with a government unwavering in its commitment to constitutionalism, entrenching the rule of law, the principle of separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary and policies that would attract both domestic and global capital;

D. whereas in its report made public on 18 December 2018, the Commission of Inquiry into the fatal shootings of 1 August 2018 blamed the army and police for the deaths, called for investigation within the security forces and prosecution of those that had committed crimes, recommended compensation for victims, and in regard to deployment of the army, alignment of the Public Order & Security Act with the Constitution;

E. whereas on 12 January 2019 the Zimbabwean government announced a 130 per cent increase in the price of fuel, as a result making it the most expensive in the world; whereas the Government said the price increases were needed to reduce fuel shortages and tackle illegal trading;

F. whereas the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions called a three day strike in protest at the fuel price increases; whereas the protests were also in response to rising poverty, the poor state of the economy, and declining living standards;

G. whereas President Mnangagwa left Harare on 14 January for Moscow and the start of a tour to four East European and Central Asian capitals, leaving his deputy, former Army commander Constantino Chiwenga in charge;

H. whereas the security forces were widely reported to have reacted brutally to the protests with over 1,000 arrests including Members of Parliament and councillors, and numerous allegations of shootings, rapes and vandalism of homes and other premises;

I. whereas human rights groups, including the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission and Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, accused state security forces of perpetrating multiple human rights abuses in response to the protests including torture, assault, destruction of property, and arbitrary arrest; whereas restrictions were also placed on the media and access

to the internet;

J. whereas the situation in Zimbabwe remains tense, with cases of violence perpetrated by the security forces still being reported in spite of a decline in large scale protests;

K. whereas President Mnangagwa returned prematurely from his foreign tour and has pledged to hold an investigation into the security forces' brutal response to the demonstrations;

L. whereas Chapter 4 of the Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe commits the State to respect the human rights and freedoms of its citizens, including in areas such as the right to personal liberty and dignity, the rights of arrested and detained persons, political rights, and freedom from torture or degrading treatment, of assembly, conscience, and freedom of the media;

M. whereas EU-Zimbabwe relations started in 1982 and are governed by the Cotonou Agreement which promotes political relations, trade, and development cooperation between both sides, as well as the reduction and eradication of poverty, promotion of human rights, and principles of democracy and the rule of law;

N. whereas Zimbabwe is a signatory to the Cotonou Agreement, Article 9 of which stipulates that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential element of ACP-EU cooperation;

O. whereas the authorities' violent response to the most recent protests, has been condemned internationally as "disproportionate" and "excessive", with the European External Action Service calling on the Government of Zimbabwe to "uphold human rights and the rule of law, as enshrined in the constitution, and ensure due legal process for those detained";

P. whereas the European Council, as part of its long-standing measures in response to systematic abuses in Zimbabwe, still maintains restrictive measures against former President Robert Mugabe and his wife Grace, having suspended the measures against former General Chiwenga and other specific individuals and entities;

Q. whereas in February 2015 the EU and Zimbabwe had signed a EUR 234 million National Indicative Programme for 2014-2020 aimed at supporting economic and political reforms; whereas the EU also channels development aid for Zimbabwe via NGOs, the United Nations, and other agencies;

1. Underlines our unanimous desire for Zimbabwe to become a peaceful, democratic and prosperous nation in which all citizens are treated well and equally under the law and where the organs of the state act on behalf of the citizens and not against them;

2. Urges President Mnangagwa to remain true to his inaugural promises, to move rapidly to take control of the situation and put Zimbabwe back on a path of reconciliation and respect for democracy and the rule of law;

3. Condemns unreservedly the violence during the recent protests, in particular the brutal crackdown and human rights abuses by the army and the systematic attacks on the structures and personalities of the opposition MDC;

4. Calls on opposition forces in Zimbabwe to ensure that their supporters behave responsibly and that their representatives engage fully in the democratic process;
5. Calls for the immediate release of all those detained during the recent protests and for the quashing of prosecutions with the exception of reliably identified perpetrators of serious and violent crimes;
6. Calls for the army to return to barracks, and for deployment of the military in aid to the civil power to be only in exceptional circumstances and strictly under Presidential control in accordance with Constitutional norms;
7. Encourages accountability for the recent violence by the army with a robust, reliable and transparent inquiry and investigation and prosecution of serious abuses by military personnel;
8. Encourages the President strongly to support the church-led moves for a national dialogue and urges Nelson Chamisa and other opposition and civil society leaders to seize opportunities for participation in such dialogue;
9. Urges the UN, the Commonwealth, the European Union and its Member States and the SADC countries to remain seized of the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe and to respond positively once it is clear that genuine and meaningful reform is in progress;
10. Reminds the Government of Zimbabwe that the support of the European Union and its Member States in the context of the Cotonou Agreement and for trade, development, and economic assistance is conditional on its respecting the rule of law and the international conventions and treaties to which it is party;
11. Calls on the European Council to review its restrictive measures against individuals and entities in Zimbabwe, including those measures currently suspended, in terms of accountability for recent state violence;
12. Urges the Government of Zimbabwe to commit to the conclusions of the Universal Periodic Review in full in order to further improve the human rights situation in the country;
13. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council, the Commission, the governments and the parliaments of the Member States, the EEAS, the Government and Parliament of Zimbabwe, the governments of the South African Development Community, the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.