

3/9/01

Motion for a resolution

tabled by SCHWAIGER, MAIJ-WEGGEN, VAN HECKE, OOMEN-RUIJTEN

on behalf of the EPP-ED Group

on the imprisonment of an opposition leader in Togo.

The European Parliament,

Hildeman
BS-566/01

A. Alarmed by the condemnation and imprisonment on 3 August 2001 of Mr Yawovi Agboyibo, leader of the main Togolese opposition party, Comité d'Action pour le Renouveau (CAR), and a well-known defender of human rights;

B. Whereas Mr Agboyibo has been condemned to 6 months of imprisonment for allegedly defaming in 1998 the current Prime Minister, Mr Agbeyomé Kodjo;

C. Whereas serious doubts persist as to the fairness of the trial and as to the independence of the Court, whose President also represents the ruling party in the National Electoral Commission;

D. Whereas the declaration of 6 October 1998, which the Court interpreted as defamatory, was signed by Mr Agboyibo acting as leader of an opposition party, following the brutal assassination of a CAR local leader and in the context of the massive violations of human rights which preceded and followed the Presidential election of June 1998 and which were subsequently confirmed by the UN-OAU inquiry; whereas, to date, no action has been taken to bring to justice the perpetrators of those crimes;

1. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Mr Yawovi Agboyibo;
2. Calls for a re-run of the trial, under a new Court and with international observers, in order to guarantee Mr Agboyibo his legitimate right to a fair trial;
3. Calls on the Togolese authorities to put an end to the climate of impunity in Togo and to identify and bring to justice those responsible for the human rights violations as established by the UN-OAU inquiry;
4. Calls on the Togolese authorities to guarantee the democratic rights of all opposition parties and representatives and to allow them full participation in the forthcoming parliamentary elections as well as the presidential election of 2003;
5. Calls on EU to continue scrutinising respect for human rights and democratic principles in Togo, and to make the resumption of normal cooperation relations conditional on substantial progress to be achieved in these areas;
6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the ACP-EU Council and the Togolese government.