



8.10.2013

B7-0455/2013

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 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Clashes in Sudan and subsequent media censorship
(2013/2873(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

European Parliament resolution on Clashes in Sudan and subsequent media censorship (2013/2873(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Sudan,
 - having regard to the statements of 30 September 2013 by the Spokesperson of the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the violence in the current protests in Sudan,
 - having regard to the statement of 27 September 2013 by the Spokesperson for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights urging restraint as death toll in Sudan fuel protests rises,
 - having regard to the UN Human Rights Council Report of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, of 18 September 2013
 - having regard to the statement of 6 September by the Spokesperson of EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the Summit between the Presidents of Sudan and South Sudan in Khartoum, which took place on the 3 September in Khartoum,
 - having regards to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to the Johannesburg Principles on National Security, Freedom of Expression and Access to Information, Freedom of Expression and Access to Information, U.N. Doc. E/CN.4/1996/39 (1996),
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
 - having regard to the revised Cotonou Agreement,
 - having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 23 of September 2013 demonstrations and protests erupted throughout Sudan following President Omar Al-Bashir's announcement of cuts to fuel subsidies in a bid to reform the economy, which resulted in a sharp increase by 75% in the price of petrol and gas,
- B. whereas in protest thousands of demonstrators took to the streets of cities throughout the country including Wad Madani, Khartoum, Omdurman, Port Sudan, Atbara, Gedarif, Nyala, Kosti, and Sinnar, as the austerity measures introduced by the government together with almost doubled fuel prices hit the poor hardest,

- C. whereas economic situation of Sudan remains harsh marked by raising inflation, a weakened currency and a severe shortage of dollars to pay for imports since South Sudan gained independence two years ago, taking with it about 75% of the formerly united country's crude oil production,
- D. whereas on 30th September Leaders of Sudan People's Liberation Movement –North (SPLM-N) and Sudanese Revolutionary Front (SRF) urged supporters to join urban protests and announced preparing a military plan in order to topple the regime of the National Congress Party (NCP),
- E. whereas on 3rd of October the leader of Sudan's opposition Popular Congress Party (PCP) Hassan al-Turabi called on President Omar al-Bashir to step down peacefully before facing the fate of previous dictators in the region,
- F. whereas two arrest warrants for President al-Bashir were issued in 2009, and in 2010 by the International Criminal Court and whereas although Sudan is not a state party to the Rome Statute, the UN Security Council Resolution 1593 (2005) requires Sudan to cooperate with the ICC, and therefore Sudan must comply with the arrest warrant of the International Criminal Court,
- G. whereas increasing riots spreading throughout the country result in damaging petrol stations, vehicles and road blockades, as well as setting fire to a university building in Khartoum,
- H. whereas the crackdown on thousands of protesters has been violent, leaving at least 50 dead and 300 injured, with police and security forces being reported to use excessive forces including live ammunition; whereas under international law, intentional lethal use of firearms can only be justified when strictly unavoidable and only in order to protect life,
- I. whereas at least 800 activists, including members of opposition parties and journalists, have been arrested during the recent protests and are being held incommunicado; and whereas on October 2nd, a court in Gezira state capital city of Wad Medani issued sentences including imprisonment, flogging, and fines against 45 demonstrators arrested during recent protests;
- J. whereas Sudanese officials accused the SRF forces of being involved in the burning and looting of public and private buildings, vehicles and petrol stations in order to destabilise the security situation of the country,
- K. whereas on the 2nd of |October President Bashir announced that the increase in fuel prices was necessary to avoid the collapse of the economy following the increase in inflation and instability in the exchange rate,
- L. whereas on October 3rd, dozens of female youths have lined in front of Sudan's army general command building holding banners denouncing the political situation of the country;
- M. whereas on October 3rd, the United Nations Independent Expert on the situation of human

rights in the Sudan, Mashood Adebayo Baderin, expressed deep concern at the large number of arrests and detentions by the authorities since mass protests began on 23 September in parts of the Sudan, as well as the heavy censorship on local media; whereas he urged "the government of Sudan to charge all those arrested with a recognizable offence or immediately release them" and called on the authorities "to end censorship on newspapers and media outlets and enable basic freedoms, including the freedom to demonstrate peacefully";

- N. whereas the Khartoum governor Abdel-Rahman Al-Khidir announced that the government would start distributing cash to half a million families to compensate for the fuel prices and food prices, and the deputy finance minister announced that the salary increases were planned to start in mid-October,
 - O. whereas the education ministry said that schools will remain closed until 20 October,
 - P. whereas since the start of demonstrations in Sudan newspapers and media outlets were suspended or censored and known members of political opposition parties, other activists and journalists have been detained,
 - Q. whereas Reporters Without Borders condemned measures undertaken by the government since the start of the unrest including disconnecting the Internet, seizing newspapers and harassing journalists,
 - R. whereas on the 25 of September National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS) summoned the editors of the main newspapers to its headquarters and forbade them to publish any information about the protests that did not come from government sources,
 - S. whereas Sudan is placed 170th out of 179 countries in the Reporters Without Borders 2013 Press Freedom Index.
1. Expresses its deep concern over deteriorating political, economic and social situation in Sudan; strongly condemns the violence and loss of life during recent protests which swept throughout the country,
 2. Calls on all sides not to resort to violence and to take all measures in order to avoid the unrest in the country to develop into an armed conflict; urges in this respect the government side to refrain from the excessive use of force and to ensure complying with international human rights obligations and urges the protesters to maintain the peaceful nature of their demonstrations,
 3. Deplores the use of live ammunition on protesters resulting in unlawful killings and calls on the Sudanese government to vigorously launch an investigation in this respect, and ensure that those responsible for breaching the law are brought to justice, as impunity cannot be tolerated,
 4. Stresses that all detainees must be given the opportunity for a fair trial with credible investigation, right to attorney and respect of the presumption of innocence, and that the government must allow the detainees access to their families and medical care;

5. Calls on the Government of Sudan to respect civil liberties including freedom of expression, media and the right to peaceful assembly,
6. Recalls the June 2008 GAERC conclusions addressing the continued failure of the Government of Sudan to cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) and underlining that the Government of Sudan has an obligation, and the capacity, to cooperate, also pointing out that any arrest warrant issued by the ICC should be respected; reminds that President Omar al-Bashir is wanted by the ICC for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide
7. Calls on all political forces of Sudan to engage in a deep and comprehensive political dialogue in order to solve current political tensions which may lead to a greater destabilisation of the country; deplures in this respect taking the power over by coup d'Etat,
8. Calls on the Sudanese Government to introduce necessary political and economic reforms in order to provide solutions to the country's chronic economic mismanagement, poverty, rising levels of corruption, and insecurity in the West and the South,
9. Calls on the EU High Representative Baroness Ashton to denounce her decision to terminate the mandate of the EU's Special Representative for Sudan/South Sudan, which is due to terminate at the end of this month; asks for the extension of the Special Representative's mandate instead of the plan to add Sudan to the already overburdened mandate of the Special Representative for the Horn of Africa as without a designated EU Special Representative for Sudan/South Sudan the EU will be left on the side-lines of international negotiations and efforts;
10. Urges the Sudanese government to put an end to censorship measures imposed on media, to protect journalists and to guarantee access to independent sources of information in order to encourage dialogue,
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, HR/VP Catherine Ashton, the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary General, the institutions of the African Union, the Government of Sudan, the President of Sudan, the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly and the EU Member States.