



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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*Plenary sitting*

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10.2.2015

B8-0148/2015

## 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 Burundi: the case of Bob Rugurika  
(2015/2561(RSP))

**Javier Nart, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Fernando Maura Barandiarán, Ivo Vajgl, Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz, Marielle de Sarnez, Pavel Telička, Juan Carlos Girauta Vidal, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Gérard Deprez, Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea, Ivan Jakovčić, Louis Michel, Marietje Schaake, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Petras Auštrevičius, Kaja Kallas, Robert Rochefort, Jozo Radoš, Johannes Cornelis van Baalen**  
on behalf of the ALDE Group

**B8-0148/2015**

**European Parliament resolution on Burundi: the case of Bob Rugurika  
(2015/2561(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- Having regard to its previous resolutions on Burundi, notably its resolution 2014/2833 of 16 September 2014 concerning in particular the case of Pierre Claver Mbonimpa,
- having regard to the African Charter on Human Rights,
- having regard to the Cotonou Agreement, in particular its article 96 on the consultation procedure and appropriate measures as regards human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law,
- having regard to the statement by the EU Delegation in Burundi of 10 September 2014,
- having regard to the statement by the UN Security Council of 10 April 2014 on the situation in Burundi,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the opinion of 25 April 2013 of the National Consultative Commission on Human Rights (CNCDDH) whereby the guarantee of freedom of the press through reform of the confidentiality of sources,

A. whereas research by Bob Rugurika, Director of African public radio (R.P.A.), about the identity of the murderers of the 3 Italian nuns of Guido Maria Comforti parish of Kamengué in Burundi in September 2014, is entirely in line with his profession as journalist and his duty to inform although the testimonies collected suggest an alleged person behind the assassination,

B. whereas the imprisonment of Bob Rugurika for conducting these investigations is completely arbitrary and unjustified, and that the charges against him, namely: “public solidarity breaking, infringement of confidentiality of inquiry, and complicity in murder” are ludicrous, whereas on 4 February 2015, the court refused to grant Bob Rugurika provisional release,

C. whereas the press law in Burundi validated on 7 January 2014 by the Constitutional Court of Burundi is repressive, and that in view of this Law and false charges against him, Bob Rugurika may be condemned for 20 years of jail,

D. whereas the country is in 132th place out of 179 countries in the World Press Freedom Index 2013 published by Reporters without Borders,

E. whereas precedent court cases against journalists in Burundi, including Jean-Claude Kavumbagu Director of online Net-Press, Hassan Ruvakuki journalist of Bonesha FM Radio, whereas the case brought against human right activist Pierre Claver Mbonimpa, arrested in May 2014 following remarks made on the radio,

F. whereas the 2014 Worldwide Report of Human Rights Watch, notably the part on Burundi and more particularly on the harassment of civil society activists and journalists,

G. whereas the imprisonment of Bob Rugurika brought about a considerable mobilisation of civil society and journalists who have decided to demonstrate every Tuesday around the Law courts in Bujumbura, wearing green T-shirts, prisoners' uniform colour in Burundi,

H. whereas full respect for freedom of expression, both for journalists and human rights defenders, is an essential precondition for free and fair elections in 2015 and the acceptance of the results by all national citizens and by the International Community,

I. whereas the EU has recently allocated EUR 432 million to Burundi under the European Development Fund 2014-2020 in order to support, inter alia, improving the governance and civil society in the country;

J. whereas on 19 January 2015 the EU and Burundi signed a financing agreement of EUR 8 million for the coming elections,

1. Strongly condemns the detention of the journalist Bob Rugurika and calls for his immediate and unconditional release;

2. Is deeply concerned about these restrictions to freedom of speech and freedom of the press and expressly requires the Government of Burundi to ensure that Burundian citizens exercise their fundamental rights, particularly in the run-up to the next elections (May, June, and July 2015),

3. is particularly concerned about possible slippages that could result from the continuing detention of the journalist Bob Rugurika and increasing demands for his release, and calls on the Burundian Government to take all calming measures in order to ensure social peace which is an essential condition for the proper conduct of future elections,

4. Recalls that Burundi is bound by the human rights clause of the Cotonou Agreement, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter of Human and People's Rights and that consequently it is unconditional obligation to comply with universal human rights, including freedom of the press,

5. Reiterates its deep concern on the need for an independent judiciary and free exercise of all constituent powers, in order to be the warrant of a democratic state;
6. Calls on all components of civil society for moderation during public protests, without, however, waiving the civil rights and civic duties of the demonstrators;
7. Calls on the EU High Representative and the Member States to ensure that there is a clear EU policy in respect of Burundi, based on principles and addressing serious violations of human rights observed pursuant to the EU Strategic Framework on Human Rights,
8. Calls on the Commission to consider to launch consultations with the country under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, with a view to its possible withdrawal from the Agreement, and to take appropriate measures to conduct such consultations,
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member States, the Government of Burundi and the governments of the countries of the Great Lakes region, the African Union, the United Nations Secretary-General, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP).