



10.3.2015

B8-0268/2015

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 Tanzania, notably the issue of land grabbing
(2015/2604(RSP))

Cristian Dan Preda, Maurice Ponga, Andrey Kovatchev, György Hölvényi, Ramona Nicole Mănescu, Jiří Pospíšil, Giovanni La Via, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Stanislav Polčák, Csaba Sógor, Tomáš Zdechovský, Lara Comi, Jaromír Štětina, Pavel Svoboda, József Nagy, Tunne Kelam, Lars Adaktusson, Joachim Zeller, Andrej Plenković, David McAllister, Ivana Maletić, Therese Comodini Cachia, Mariya Gabriel, Dubravka Šuica
on behalf of the PPE Group

B8-0268/2015

European Parliament resolution on Tanzania, notably the issue of land grabbing (2015/2604(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Tanzania,
 - having regard to the G8 Land Transparency Initiative of 2013,
 - having regard to the UN Committee on World Food Security Guidelines on the responsible governance of tenure of land adopted on 11 May 2012,
 - having regard to the “Framework and guidelines on land policy in Africa” adopted in 2009 by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government,
 - having regard to the African Union Guiding principles on Large Scale Land Based Investment of 2009,
 - having regard to the EU Land Policy Guidelines to provide guidance to land policy development and programming in developing countries of 2004,
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. Whereas the Tanzanian authorities announced a plan to sell 1 500 square kilometers of Masaai land in Western Serengeti to a private luxury hunting and safari company based in the United Arab Emirates; whereas this plan involves the eviction of 40 000 Masaai pastoralists;
- B. Whereas due to international pressure, the President of Tanzania, Jakaya Kikwete, claimed in November 2014 to have dropped the plan and pledged never to force the Masaai people out of their homes; whereas despite the promise made, thousands of Masaai were illegally evicted from their lands; whereas witnesses have reported that over 200 houses were burnt by the Tanzanian government forces, leaving more than 3 000 people homeless and without shelter;
- C. Whereas conflicts about the land between the government, investors and local communities have carried on for the past 20 years due to large scale land acquisitions by foreign companies, investment funds or governments themselves;
- D. Whereas Tanzania witnessed a significant increase of foreign and domestic interest in establishing large-scale biofuel plantations in the country between 2005 and 2008, when around 640 000 ha of land was allocated to investors;
- E. Whereas large scale land acquisitions can be defined as “land grabbing” when there is a clear violation of human rights, when the displacement of local communities is done

without their consent, when it is not based on transparent contracts, and when there is an assessed negative social, economic and environmental impact;

- F. Whereas in Tanzania, the practice of large scale land acquisitions has become more and more aggressive over the years, thus depriving peasants and rural households of their lands and livelihoods, increasing their food insecurity;
- G. Whereas land is inextricably tied to labour as it provides employment to nearly 67% of the population through agricultural activities; whereas according to latest figures, only 2% of African university graduates study agriculture;
- H. Whereas Tanzania suffers acute rural poverty with 20% of the rural Tanzanian population living in extreme poverty; whereas pastoralists, including the Masai people, continue to face a massive loss of their land due to the selling out of land without adequate knowledge about the legal and practical consequences, corrupt and illegal allocation of land to foreigners;
- I. Whereas the EU launched in May 2014 a new programme to strengthen land governance and help improve the food and nutrition security of family farmers and vulnerable communities in African countries;
 - 1. Firmly condemns the illegal displacement of local rural communities, the destruction of their villages and traditional way of life, and the violation of their basic human rights;
 - 2. Insists that large scale land acquisitions may pose serious threats to the human rights of host communities by denying land users access to vital natural resources, undermining local livelihoods, jeopardizing food security, and exacerbating tenure insecurity;
 - 3. Calls on the Tanzanian authorities to implement the existing legislation on land rights in order to protect communities and smallholders farmers, and to duly respect the provisions on consultation and compensation in case of land expropriation;
 - 4. Expresses its concern on the lack of accurate information and the secrecy surrounding a number of investments in Tanzania;
 - 5. Recalls that large-scale projects are often causing severe damage to the natural environment, including the clearing of forests, loss of biodiversity and contamination of water;
 - 6. Urges the government of Tanzania to promote agricultural investment policies which benefit the local population in the regions concerned, to comply and enforce its policies regarding social and environmental impact assessments, including assessments of impacts on local food production before the commencement of any investment project;
 - 7. Supports all measures aiming at providing a better access to justice and legal aid to communities in land conflict, and promoting their full enjoyment of legitimate tenure rights;

8. Stresses the importance of full transparency and accountability of the operations of EU companies and financial institutions in large-scale agribusiness investments and land acquisitions in Tanzania;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the African Union and the Government and the Parliament of Tanzania.