



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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*Plenary sitting*

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19.5.2015

B8-0465/2015

## **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 Zimbabwe, the case of human rights defender Itai Dzamara  
(2015/2710(RSP))

**Geoffrey Van Orden; Charles Tannock, Mark Demesmaeker, Ryszard Czarnecki, Jana Žitňanská**  
on behalf of the ECR Group

**B8-0465/2015**

**European Parliament resolution on Zimbabwe, the case of human rights defender Itai Dzamara (2015/2710(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Zimbabwe,
  - having regard to the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community, on the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23rd June 2000 (the Cotonou Agreement),
  - having regard to Council Decisions 2014/98/CFSP of 17th February 2014 and 2015/277/CFSP of 19th February 2015 amending Decision 2011/101/CFSP concerning restrictive measures against Zimbabwe,
  - having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders,
  - having regard to the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights of June 1981, which Zimbabwe has ratified,
  - having regard to the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders of December 1998,
  - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. Whereas Zimbabwe remains in a deep economic and political abyss, with continuing political repression and instability and a 'deeply fractured society in which citizens fear authority and are manipulated by propaganda' according to the former Chief Research Fellow of Afrobarometer;
- B. Whereas on 9th March 2015 Itai Dzamara a free-lance journalist, opponent of Robert Mugabe and leader of the Occupy Africa Unity Square (AUS) was abducted by armed men near his home in Harare, Zimbabwe;
- C. Whereas on 13th March the Zimbabwean High Court ordered the Home Affairs Minister, the police Commissioner-General, and the Director-General of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO) to search for Mr. Dzamara and to report progress to the court every two weeks until his whereabouts are determined; whereas as to date this High Court Order has been ignored by those authorities responsible for acting upon it;
- D. Whereas on 27th of April, activists organised a peaceful protest and car procession to raise awareness of Mr. Dzamara's apparent forced disappearance, and subsequently 11 of these activists were detained and held for six hours;

- E. Whereas previously Mr. Dzamara has led a number of peaceful protests against the deteriorating political and economic environment in Zimbabwe, petitioned President Robert Mugabe to resign to allow for fresh elections, and called for reforms to the electoral system;
- F. Whereas two days before he was arrested Mr. Dzamara addressed a political rally, organised by the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC-T), speaking against the worsening repression and economic conditions in Zimbabwe;
- G. Whereas Mr. Dzamara was assaulted and left hospitalised on several occasions in 2014 and 2015 by police and supporters of Mugabe's ruling ZANU-PF party;
- H. Whereas the abduction and disappearance of Mr. Dzamara represents another case in the long line of cases of intimidation, arbitrary arrests, judicial harassment and disappearances of human rights activists and political opponents of Robert Mugabe's Zanu-PF;
1. Condemns the abduction of Itai Dzamara and calls on the Home Affairs Minister and the responsible authorities in Zimbabwe to fulfil their duty and legal obligation to maintain human rights and the rule of law and comply immediately with the order of the High Court of Zimbabwe to find Mr Dzamara and account for his whereabouts;
  2. Condemns the violence and acts of intimidation perpetrated by the Zimbabwean authorities in the months leading up to Mr. Dzamara's disappearance;
  3. Condemns the harassment and arrest of peaceful protesters who were raising awareness of Mr. Dzmara's abduction;
  4. Calls on the Zimbabwean authorities to ensure the safety and security of Sheffra Dzamara, the wife of Itai Dzamara, and her children;
  5. Condemns the continuing violation of human rights in Zimbabwe, including the political intimidation, harassment and arbitrary arrests of human rights activists;
  6. Calls on the authorities to ensure all Zimbabweans are able to enjoy freedom of speech, assembly and association and reminds the Government that they must without delay repeal or amend domestic laws in order to bring them in line with their new constitution and the Country's obligations under international law;
  7. Believes that the promotion of democracy, and the protection of human rights and the rule of law is essential if Zimbabwe is to become a free and prosperous country, once more engaged with and supported by the country's former international partners;
  8. Calls therefore for concerted action by the international community, in particular the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Commonwealth, to encourage a broad-based political dialogue within Zimbabwe that might lead to political and economic progress;

9. Calls upon Council, given the deterioration of human rights and continuing political oppression in Zimbabwe, to reconsider its decisions of 17th February 2014 and 19th February 2015, and target measures against those individuals responsible for abuse and consider additional action;
10. Instructs its President to forward this Resolution to the Council, the European Commission, the High Representative for Foreign Affairs, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, the Chairmen of the Commission and Executive Council of the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, the Secretary-General and governments of the Southern African Development Community and its Parliamentary Forum and the government and the Parliament of Zimbabwe.