



Plenary sitting

1.7.2015

B8-0657/2015

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Burundi
(2015/2723(RSP))

Charles Tannock, Mark Demesmaeker, Geoffrey Van Orden
on behalf of the ECR Group

B8-0657/2015

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Burundi
(2015/2723(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Burundi,
 - having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance,
 - having regard to the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement,
 - having regard to the Communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union of 13 June 2015,
 - having regard to the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 28 May 2015 on the suspension of the election observation mission to Burundi,
 - having regard to the statements by the EEAS spokesperson of 5 and 17 June 2015 on Burundi,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 18 May 2015 and of 22 June 2015 on Burundi,
 - having regard to the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 10 June 2015 on the situation in Burundi,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Burundi has been in crisis since late April over President Nkurunziza's bid to seek a third five-year term in office in violation of the Arusha Agreement and the Burundian constitution;
- B. whereas this bid to cling to power provoked a serious division in society and in politics; whereas, even within the ruling CNDD-FDD party, a key member, the second vice-president of the country, Gervais Ruffykiri, urged the president to 'put the interests of the Burundian people before [his] personal interests and withdraw [his] presidential bid, because it violates the constitution', and sought refuge in Belgium;

- C. whereas around 70 people have been killed during weeks of protests against the third term, which have been brutally suppressed, triggering an exodus of more than 110 000 Burundians into the neighbouring countries of Tanzania, Rwanda and the DRC;
 - D. whereas the Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department has already released EUR 1.5 million to meet the immediate needs of Burundian refugees arriving in Rwanda;
 - E. whereas, in a communiqué issued on 9 June 2015, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed alarm at the increasingly violent and threatening actions by a pro-government militia and urged the authorities to take immediate and concrete measures to rein them in;
 - F. whereas Burundi's ruling party has boycotted the restart of UN-mediated crisis talks;
 - G. whereas the clampdown on the media is almost total, as a result of the closure of privately-owned broadcasters in mid-May, the mass exodus of journalists and the constant threats against those still in Burundi;
 - H. whereas on 1 June 2015, the Vice-Chairman and the Commissioner in charge of Administration and Finance of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) resigned from their posts, stating that 'the prevailing political and security situation does not provide the necessary conditions' for the holding of free, fair and credible elections, and that a presidential decree of 30 May 2015 has introduced changes to the decision-making process of the INEC that no longer require decisions to be taken by consensus;
 - I. whereas Burundi went to polls on Monday 29 June 2015 in local and parliamentary elections, ahead of the presidential vote on 15 July, despite the warning of both the African Union and the East African Community (EAC) that 'conditions for the holding of elections do not currently exist' and the call of the EAC Summit for the postponement of the elections for a period not exceeding the constitutional mandate of the current authorities and for the cessation of violence, in order to create conditions conducive to the organisation of free, fair and credible elections;
 - J. whereas the current situation has an impact on the economic and social life of Burundians; whereas most schools and university campuses are closed because of violent demonstrations in the capital, Bujumbura, the local currency has depreciated, unemployment has increased and tax revenues have decreased, because of the closure of commercial centres and the slowdown of trade with neighbouring states;
1. Is of the opinion that the elections held in Burundi on 29 June 2015 cannot be considered free, fair, credible and inclusive because the election process was seriously marred by restrictions on independent media, excessive use of force against demonstrators, a climate of intimidation for opposition parties and civil society and a lack of confidence in the election authorities, and urges the Burundian authorities to postpone the presidential elections of 15 July 2015 and to involve all the stakeholders in the efforts to create an environment conducive to a peaceful, credible, free and fair electoral process;
 2. Urges all Burundian stakeholders to resume the dialogue on all areas of disagreement

between the parties as soon as possible, since only dialogue and consensus based on respect for the Arusha Agreement and the constitution of Burundi, can pave the way for a lasting political solution that would consolidate and preserve peace and security in Burundi and stability in the Great Lakes Region, deepen democracy and the rule of law, and restore a peaceful and secure environment to encourage the return of the refugees;

3. Recalls the obligations under the Cotonou Agreement in terms of respect for human rights, democratic values and the rule of law, and the possibility of instituting the consultation procedures provided for in the Agreement, including Article 96;
4. Calls on the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to support the mediation efforts made by the African Union, the EAC and the UN;
5. Asks the Commission to ensure that its Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department continues to closely monitor the situation, and to consider additional humanitarian aid to cater for the needs of Burundian refugees in the neighbouring countries;
6. Recalls the determination expressed by the Council in its conclusions of 22 June 2015 to adopt, if necessary, targeted restrictive measures against those whose actions might have led or might lead to acts of violence and repression and serious human rights violations, and/or might hamper the search for a political solution within the framework proposed by the African Union and the EAC;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member States, the Government of Burundi, the African Union, the East African Community, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Pan-African Parliament.