



Plenary sitting

B8-1353/2015

9.12.2015

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
(2015/2973(RSP))

**Mariya Gabriel, Davor Ivo Stier, Cristian Dan Preda,
Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Michael Gahler, Maurice Ponga, Joachim Zeller,
Eleni Theoharous, Kinga Gál, Anna Záborská, Fernando Ruas,
Elisabetta Gardini, Lorenzo Cesa, Lara Comi, József Nagy,
Ramón Luis Valcárcel Siso**
on behalf of the PPE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Burundi
(2015/2973(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Burundi,
- having regard to United Nations Security Council resolution 2248 (2015) of 12 November 2015 on the situation in Burundi,
- having regard to the joint statement of 12 November 2015 by the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, Jan Eliasson, the Chairperson of the African Union, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), Federica Mogherini, on Burundi,
- having regard to the decisions of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU) of 13 June, 17 October and 13 November 2015 on the situation in Burundi,
- having regard to the joint press release of 24 October 2015 by the Team of International Envoys and Representatives on the Great Lakes Region of Africa in support of the AU Peace and Security Council communiqué on Burundi,
- having regard to the EU's local statement of 9 October 2015 on the political and security crisis in Burundi,
- having regard to Council Regulation (EU) 2015/1755 of 1 October 2015 concerning restrictive measures in view of the situation in Burundi¹,
- having regard to the statement of 23 July 2015 by VP/HR Federica Mogherini following the presidential election in Burundi,
- having regard to the report of the UN Secretary-General of 7 July 2015 on the UN Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi,
- having regard to the declaration of 24 June 2015 by the Co-Chairs of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly on the situation in Burundi,
- having regard to the statement of 26 June 2015 by the President of the Security Council on the situation in Burundi,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 16 March, 18 May, 22 June and 16 November 2015 on the situation in Burundi,
- having regard to the statement issued by the East African Community Heads of State on 31 May 2015 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,

¹ OJ L 257, 2.10.2015, p. 1.

- having regard to the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi,
 - having regard to the Constitution of Burundi, and in particular Article 96 thereof,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG),
 - having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Article 96 of the Constitution of Burundi and Article 7.3 of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement stipulate that a president can serve only two terms; whereas President Pierre Nkurunziza has been in office since 2005, having been re-elected in 2010 in an election which the opposition boycotted after accusing the government of intimidation;
- B. whereas President Nkurunziza announced on 26 April 2015 that he was running for a third term, thereby plunging the country into its deepest political crisis since the end of the civil war; whereas police have used excessive force against peaceful protestors, which has resulted in great loss of life; whereas on 28 May 2015 the EU suspended its electoral mission as minimal acceptable conditions for the conduct of democratic elections were not matched; whereas Pierre Nkurunziza was re-elected on 26 August 2015 following an electoral process considered by the international community to be non-inclusive and not credible;
- C. whereas according to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) at least 198 people have been killed since April 2015, including the summary execution of 9 civilians on 13 October 2015 in the Bujumbura neighbourhood of Ngarara, allegedly by members of the police; whereas following a call from the UN Secretary-General a committee of inquiry has been set up by the Attorney-General of Burundi;
- D. whereas it is estimated that more than 200 000 people have fled Burundi and are seeking refuge in neighbouring countries; whereas in July 2015, due to the ever-worsening humanitarian situation in the country, the EU stepped up its humanitarian assistance and mobilised an additional EUR 4.5 million for the benefit of displaced populations;
- E. whereas human rights organisations point to the growing politically motivated violence and impunity in the country, with a seriously deteriorating human rights situation, summary and extrajudicial executions, arbitrary arrests and detentions, including of human rights defenders, acts of torture, threats and intimidation, mainly by the ruling authorities; whereas none of these acts are investigated or their perpetrators prosecuted;
- F. whereas in recent weeks the government has been tightening its grip on independent media and newspapers; whereas several journalists have been severely beaten by the police and judicially harassed; whereas on 23 November 2015 Burundi's Interior

Ministry shut down the activities of the main civil society groups and NGOs;

- G. whereas Burundi was one of the first countries to enter an electoral cycle in the Great Lakes region, along with Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and as such was expected to be an example for the respect of international and constitutional orders that is necessary for sustainable democratisation, peace and development in the region;
- H. whereas the African Union has recently launched an investigation into human rights abuses in Burundi and called for targeted sanctions to be imposed; whereas both the European Union and the United States have adopted targeted and individual sanctions;
- I. whereas on 26 October 2015 the EU requested the opening of consultations under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement to investigate the non-respect of essential elements of the Agreement, namely human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law;
- J. whereas the political deadlock in Burundi and the deteriorating security and economic situation are having serious consequences for the population and pose risks for the stability of the region as a whole;
- K. whereas the international community plays a significant role in the region as the guarantor of the Arusha Accords; whereas until now, however, all regional and sub-regional efforts aimed at addressing the crisis and restoring dialogue between all political forces have not produced the expected results;
- L. whereas on 1 August 2015 members of the political opposition and civil society groups met in Addis Ababa to create the National Council for the Restoration of the Arusha Accords and the Rule of Law;
- M. whereas on 23 September 2015 President Nkurunziza signed a decree creating a national commission for inter-Burundian dialogue to lead negotiations for six months; whereas civil society expressed great scepticism regarding the potential achievements of this commission;
- N. whereas on 31 November 2015, in a letter to the UN Security Council calling for measures to prevent mass atrocities in Burundi, the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, set out three options for intervention in the country, including a possible peacekeeping operation;
- O. whereas the EU contributes significantly to Burundi's annual budget, approximately half of which comes from international aid, and has recently allocated EUR 432 million to Burundi – one of the world's poorest nations – from the European Development Fund 2014-2020;
- P. whereas attacks against humanitarian personnel are increasing;
- 1. Expresses its deep concern regarding the grave security and political situation in Burundi, as well as the rapidly worsening humanitarian situation in the country; calls for an immediate end to violence and political intimidation of opponents and the immediate disarmament of all armed groups allied to political parties; extends its

condolences to the families of all victims;

2. Reminds the authorities of Burundi of their obligations to guarantee fundamental rights, as provided for in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other international and regional human rights instruments;
3. Strongly condemns any use of force against peaceful, unarmed demonstrators; urges the Burundian authorities to investigate claims of human rights abuses by police and state officials, and duly hold those responsible accountable; calls on the Burundian authorities to take the necessary measures for demilitarisation of all armed groups in a context of strict respect for international law and human rights; underlines the presence of many young persons within these armed groups, and therefore calls for a specific approach in their case and on the international community to provide support for their reintegration in order to promote their participation in a peaceful political process;
4. Calls on the Government of Burundi to continue the democratisation process in the country and to respect, protect and promote the civil and political rights of its citizens and to respect fundamental freedoms, in particular freedom of speech;
5. Emphasises once again that only through dialogue and consensus, involving the Burundian Government, opposition and civil society in accordance with the Arusha Agreement and the Burundian Constitution, can a lasting political solution be found in the interests of security for all the people of Burundi; welcomes and supports, therefore, the mediation efforts being made by the AU, the East African Community (EAC) and the UN, as well as the recent appointment of a UN Special Adviser for Burundi; calls on human rights observers and the mediator to pay attention to the situation of women and their inclusion in the political dialogue and the return to calm;
6. Recalls that the EU's partnership with Burundi is governed by the Cotonou Agreement, and that all parties are bound to respect and implement the terms of that agreement, in particular respect for human rights; notes that the activation of the Article 96 mechanism also shows the EU's commitment, not only to human rights, the rule of law and democracy, but also to the Burundian people;
7. Welcomes the deployment by the AU of human rights observers and military experts to monitor the human rights situation, and stresses the importance of cooperating with them in order to facilitate the implementation of their mandate; calls on the AU and the UN to consider deploying a peacekeeping mission should the security and human rights situation further deteriorate in Burundi;
8. Expresses its deep concern regarding the growing flow of Burundian refugees in neighbouring countries; reiterates its support for and solidarity with all humanitarian organisations operating on the ground, as well as the neighbouring host countries; welcomes, therefore, the EU's commitment to increasing financial support and humanitarian aid in order to address the urgent needs of these populations;
9. Calls on the AU and the EU to seriously consider the regional dimension and to prevent any further destabilisation of the region, in particular by maintaining a permanent

political dialogue between countries of the region, not only at the state level but also between civil society organisations and at the administrative and political levels;

10. Reaffirms its support for the targeted sanctions approved by the EU, in accordance with the decisions made by the AU and the UN, in response to the deterioration in the rule of law and the human rights situation in the country;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Member States, the Government of Burundi, the governments of the countries of the Great Lakes region, 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.