



Plenary sitting

B8-0166/2018

13.3.2018

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 mercy killings in Uganda
(2018/2632(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

B8-0166/2018

**European Parliament resolution on mercy killings in Uganda
(2018/2632(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regards to its previous resolutions on Uganda,
 - having regards to the Cotonou Agreement,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
 - having regard to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD),
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas human dignity is inviolable and must be respected and protected at all times;
- B. whereas everyone has the right to life, regardless of their abilities and disabilities;
- C. whereas recent reports on the killing of disabled children in rural parts of Uganda have led to international outcry and criticism;
- D. whereas children with disabilities remain subject to various forms of violence, discrimination and marginalization due to negative attitudes, superstition, neglect, social norms and practices, and lack of awareness of their own rights;
- E. whereas the denial of basic rights, such as access to health, education, support and rehabilitation, to children with disabilities severely hinders their ability to develop their full potential;
- F. whereas on 9 February the offices of the Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum (HRAPF) have been attacked and vandalised;
- G. whereas according to some report the mothers of children with disabilities continue to be stigmatised and fall victim to blame, discrimination and straight out violence in some parts of rural Uganda;
- H. whereas human rights groups and defenders find it increasingly difficult to engage with local populations in order to help families with disabled children, and have in some cases become subject to violence and discrimination themselves;
- I. **whereas the work of civil society groups and human rights defenders is crucial to guaranteeing the rights of marginalised and vulnerable groups;**

- J. **whereas few state-run support facilities exist for parents of disabled children in parts of rural Uganda and whereas as a consequence families, in particular single mothers, often find it difficult to adequately care for their disabled child;**
- K. **whereas insufficient public information exists on the rights of disabled children;**
- L. whereas in 2016 new programmes by the Ugandan government had specifically targeted women and youth with disabilities, and the National Cultural Policy guaranteed persons with disabilities' access to social and cultural activities;
- M. whereas in 2016 UNHCR Experts raised strong concerns at cases of torture, and cruel and inhumane treatment against persons with disabilities in psychiatric hospitals, and urged Uganda to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to establish an oversight mechanism for detention conditions; whereas these experts were also concerned about the stigmatization of persons with disabilities, and about the lack of awareness-raising efforts by the Government, and also pointed to cases of sexual violence against women with disabilities, and violence against persons with disabilities in refugee camps;
- N. whereas on 18 January 2018 President Yoweri Museveni has announced on social media that he may resume signing off on death sentences in order to help stem a wave of crime in the country; whereas death penalty remains the maximum sentence in Uganda for a range of crimes including murder, treason and defilement, but no executions have taken place since 1999;
1. Strongly condemns the unjustifiable and inhumane killing of children and new-borns with disabilities;
 2. Calls upon the Ugandan government to live up to its commitments to foster protection of children with disabilities, and to do to everything to increase educational programmes and support facilities to help families and communities throughout the country;
 3. **Expresses grave concern at increasing physical attacks on human rights defenders and civil society groups, such as the Human Rights Awareness and Promotion Forum; urges the Ugandan authorities to guarantee the safety of human rights defenders, prosecute attacks against them, and enable them to carry out their work free of threats and impediments;**
 4. **Strongly condemns any form of violence, discrimination and stigmatisation to persons with disabilities of any kind, wherever they occur;**
 5. **Highlights the urgent need to increase information campaigns about the rights of children with disability, particularly in urban and sparsely populated areas, in Uganda but also other countries, in order to protect both the children as well as their families, in particular their mothers;**
 6. **Encourages the EU institutions to prioritise programmes focusing on the protection of children with disabilities in rural parts of Uganda;**

7. **Calls on the European Commission to verify if better assistance can be granted, either through funding or coordination with local institutions, to improve medical support to children with disabilities in order to extend urgently needed support to their families;**
8. **Calls on EU institutions and Member States to raise the pressing issue of euphemistically called “mercy killings” immediately with their counterparts in the Ugandan government in order to increase pressure on local governments and actors to become active as soon as possible;**
- 8 bis Recalls that the European Union has a strong and principled position against the death penalty; calls on President Museveni not to resume executions, as this would destroy more than a decade of progress on death penalty and would undermine the global efforts towards abolition;**
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Council and the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of Uganda, to UNICEF and the UN Human Rights Council.