



Plenary sitting

B8-0367/2018

11.9.2018

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 Uganda, notably the arrest of parliamentarians from the opposition (2018/2840(RSP))

Elena Valenciano, Soraya Post, Norbert Neuser
on behalf of the S&D Group

European Parliament resolution on Uganda, notably the arrest of parliamentarians from the opposition (2018/2840(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Uganda,
 - having regard to the joint local statement on Arua municipality by-election issued on 17 August 2018 by The European Union Delegation, the Heads of Mission of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and UK, and the Heads of Mission of Norway and Iceland in Uganda,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights ratified by the Republic of Uganda on 21 June 1995,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, to which Uganda is a signatory,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance,
 - having regard to the report on Uganda of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council,
 - having regard to the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement (‘Cotonou Agreement’) and in particular to Article 8(4) thereof on non-discrimination,
 - having regard to the Uganda’s Constitution of 1995 amended in 2005,
 - having regard to the United Nations Convention against Torture of 10 December 1984
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of procedure,
- A. whereas the August 15 by-election in Arua in north western Uganda, won by independent candidate Mr Kassiano Wadri, was marked by violence;
- B. Whereas Kizza Besigye, the leader for Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) and a four time presidential candidate was arrested 7 times by police or army between 2001 and 2017, last on 25 September 2017 the security forces harshly repressed opposition to the removal of presidential age limits of 75 years from the Constitution;
- C. Whereas on 13 August 2018, Ugandan police and military arrested and beat four opposition Members of Parliament (Robert Kyagulanyi, Francis Zaake, Gerald Karuhanga, and Paul Mwiru), two former Members (Mike Mabikke and Kassiano

Wadri), at least two journalists (Herbert Zzziwa and Ronald Muwanga), while a driver (Yasiin Kawuma) of an MP (Robert Kyagulanyi, better known as Bobi Wine, elected as an independent Member of Parliament during a legislative by-election on 29 June 2017) was shot dead and 28 others while they were campaigning for an opposition candidate in ahead of the August 15 by-elections in the town of Arua;

- D. whereas the arrests spark deadly riots in the country, one person was killed and five other protesters were injured when police fired teargas and live bullets in Mityana at about 60 km from Kampala, Deutsche Welle reported that on 19 August 2018, protests also erupted in Kamwokya, Gayaza, and Mukono townships;
- E. whereas military prosecutors charged MP Robert Kyagulanyi alias Bobi Wine with unlawful possession of firearms and ammunition before a military court, after he had been held incommunicado for three days, whereas his lawyers and his family said that members of the military's Special Forces Command beat and severely injured him that he appeared not to stand steady on his feet in court;
- F. whereas under pressure, Kampala had to back down, the court dropped the initial weapons charges against Bobi Wine, but presented new charges of treason over his alleged role in a stone-throwing campaign against President Yoweri Museveni's convoy while traveling in northwestern Uganda; whereas MP Bobi Wine was released on bail and allowed to leave the country and admitted to a hospital in Washington for treatment on 2 September 2018;
- G. whereas Uganda has not practiced a single peaceful transfer of power since independence from Britain in 1962; whereas Yoweri Museveni took power by force in 1986 and since then, the Constitution is amended periodically to allow him to stay in power; whereas he is in his fifth presidential term since the 2005 amendments to the Uganda's Constitution lifted the two terms limit; whereas the ruling party enjoying its overwhelming majority in the National Assembly have passed a bill that removed the age limit of 75 to run in a presidential election to enable President Yoweri Museveni, 74 years old, to seek a sixth term when his current mandate expires in 2021 and may expand to a life presidency;
- H. whereas Uganda has been lauded across the world for its progressive refugee policy with 1,395,146 refugees and asylum-seekers as for January 2018 according to UNHCR and Government of Uganda, its involvement in regional peace and security issues such as DRC, South Sudan, Burundi, and its participation in the "war against terror" by deploying forces in Somalia; whereas the complacent policy as for a regional ally is shielding the government of Uganda from critical questions about respect for human rights and respect for the rule of law in the country and turning a blind eye to the corruption and the rising authoritarianism of Yoweri Museveni;
- I. whereas the former UN High Commissioner for Human rights, Mr Zeid Raïd al-Husseïn, urged the Government of Uganda to conduct a thorough independent and

impartial investigation into the serious human rights allegations of extra-judicial killings, excessive use of force, torture and other forms of ill-treatment, and to bring to justice those responsible;

- J. whereas there are serious concerns about the rule of law, the respect for human rights and the respect for free press, for civil society and the respect for people who are critical of the government; whereas Uganda is party to the United Nations Convention against Torture and one of only ten African countries with anti-torture legislation;
1. Expresses its deep concern on the events that have occurred during the Arua Municipality by-election, the reported brutal treatment and arrest of elected Members of the Uganda Parliament, journalists and civilians, as well as the loss of human lives, calls on Ugandan security forces to show restraint while policing protests, acting lawfully and with full respect for human rights law, and let journalists freely do their information work,
 2. calls on the Ugandan authorities to launch a prompt, independent, impartial and effective investigations and prosecute all those responsible for the deaths of people in Arua and Mityana;
 3. calls on Uganda's government to end with immediate effect attempts to silence political opposition and stifle dissenting voices in the country, urges the law enforcement to protect basic freedoms without any form of intimidation thereby complying with Article 24 of the Uganda's Constitution which stipulates "no person shall be subject to any form of torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment",
 4. calls upon the Government of Uganda, the political parties and the civil society to cooperate in addressing in swift and transparent way the events that have led to the political unrest and thereby caused much suffering to citizens,
 5. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the President of the Republic of Uganda, the Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament and the African Union and its institutions.