



Plenary sitting

B8-0372/2018

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

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on behalf of the PPE Group

**European Parliament resolution on Uganda, 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 of 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 of 17 August 2018 on Arua Municipality by-election,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, to which Uganda is a signatory,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Uganda is a signatory,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG),
 - 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 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda,
 - having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984,
 - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the by-election on 15 August 2018 in Arua in north western Uganda, won by independent candidate Mr Kassiano Wadri, was marked by violence;
- B. whereas the President of Uganda, Yoweri Museveni and independent MP Robert Kyagulanyi Ssentamu, also known as Bobi Wine, together with several other politicians campaigned in Arua on 13 August 2018 in the framework of a highly charged by-election, triggered by the assassination of a parliamentarian back in June;
- C. whereas Bobi Wine, a popular musician, has emerged as an influential critic of President Museveni after winning a seat in the Ugandan Parliament in 2017;
- D. whereas on 13th August at the end of the day, the driver of Mr Wine, Mr Yasin Kawuma, was shot dead in unclear circumstances, and as President Museveni left Arua, supporters

of Kassiano Wadri allegedly attacked the presidential car with stones;

- E. whereas police arrested two journalists from NTV as they reported live from the area where Mr Kawuma was killed;
- F. whereas both Mr Wine and Mr Wadri, together with several others, were arrested shortly thereafter; whereas Mr Wine was accused of possession of firearms;
- G. whereas 33 people including Mr Wadri and 4 Members of Parliament, were charged with treason the day after the election and Mr Wine was charged with illegal firearms possession in a military court;
- H. whereas the protests triggered, both in Arua and Kampala, by these arrests have been violently quashed by Uganda's security forces; whereas the use of tear gas and live ammunition has been reported;
- I. whereas on 20th August 2018, James Akena, a photographer working for Reuters news agency was beaten by soldiers, arrested and detained for several hours as he covered the #freeBobiWine political protests in Kampala;
- J. whereas there are reports that Mr Wine and other persons detained were tortured whilst in custody; whereas, after initially having denied these allegations, the authorities have vowed to investigate them;
- K. whereas Mr Wine was later charged with treason in a civilian court, following the decision of the military court not to proceed with the charges on illegal possession of firearms;
- L. whereas Mr Wine was subsequently released on bail, and has left Uganda to seek treatment in the US;
- M. whereas the former UN High Commissioner for Human rights, Mr Zeid Ra'ad al-Hussein, 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;
- N. whereas arrests and intimidations of opposition political figures happen routinely in Uganda;
 - 1. Expresses its deep concern at the arrest of opposition parliamentarians in conjunction with the Arua by-election;
 - 2. Stresses that it is vital for the Ugandan democracy that the President and the Government of Uganda respect the independence of the Parliament as an institution and the independence of the mandate of its Members, and ensures that all Members of Parliament can freely pursue their elected mandates;
 - 3. Calls on the Ugandan authorities to drop what appears to be the trumped-up charges against Bobi Wine and to stop the crack-down against opposition politicians and supporters;
 - 4. Urges the authorities of Uganda to immediately launch an effective, impartial and

independent investigation into the killing of Mr Kawuma and into reports of deaths and excessive use of force during the protests; expects a swift and independent investigation into the allegations of torture and mistreatment of the people arrested in Arua; stresses the need to bring to justice those responsible;

5. Reiterates its commitment to freedom of expression and reaffirms the key role played by the media in a democratic society; notes with concern that journalists that covered the demonstrations, and the riots that erupted, have been beaten along with participants, and that two journalists were arrested; calls on the Ugandan authorities to create an environment where journalists can exercise unhindered their work of informing about political evolutions in the country;
6. Reminds the authorities of Uganda of their obligations to guarantee, protect and promote fundamental rights, including the civil and political rights of its citizens such as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly; reminds Uganda's Government of its international obligations, in particular regarding respect for fundamental freedoms and the rule of law and the handling of court cases, particularly the right to a fair and impartial trial,
7. Calls on the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to closely monitor the situation in Uganda; stresses that the European Parliament should be informed of any further signs that opposition Members of the Uganda Parliament are hindered or obstructed in their work as legislators;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, 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.