



Plenary sitting

B9-0288/2020

15.9.2020

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 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the case of Dr. Denis Mukwege in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
(2020/2783(RSP))

Salima Yenbou, Heidi Hautala, Michèle Rivasi, Francisco Guerreiro, Bronis Ropė, Mounir Satouri, Anna Cavazzini, Hannah Neumann, Ernest Urtasun, Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana, Jordi Solé, Saskia Bricmont, Katrin Langensiepen, Reinhard Bütikofer
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
Fabio Massimo Castaldo

**European Parliament resolution on the case of Dr. Denis Mukwege in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)
(2020/2783(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),
 - having regard to the awarding of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2014 and to the awarding of the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize to Dr Denis Mukwege,
 - having regard to the Statement by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell on the security situation in Ituri of 20th May 2020,
 - having regard to the Democratic Republic of Congo 1993-2003 UN Mapping Report, 2010,
 - having regards the OHCHR-MONUSCO report on violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Allied Democratic Forces armed group and by members of the defense and security forces in Beni territory, North Kivu province and Irumu and Mambasa territories, Ituri province, between 1 January 2019 and 31 January 2020 , July 2020;
 - having regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms,
 - having regard to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
 - having regard to the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights of 1981,
 - having regard to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, better known as the Maputo Protocol, of 2003,
 - having regard to the Constitution of the DRC, adopted on 18 February 2006,
 - having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
 - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. Whereas Dr Denis Mukwege, renown Congolese gynaecologist, has dedicated most of his life to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict;

- B. Whereas in 2014 the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought and in 2018 the Nobel Peace Prize were awarded to Dr Mukwege for his work in helping victims of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo;
- C. Whereas Dr Mukwege is the founder of the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, the capital of the Sud-Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where thousands of victims of sexual violence have been treated after years of military violence and rape against women in the region;
- D. Whereas Dr Mukwege has continuously and actively called for the establishment of an international criminal court to bring perpetrators of these crimes to justice, including crimes documented in the 2010 UN Congo Mapping Project report;
- E. Whereas Dr Mukwege escaped an assassination attempt at his house in October 2012; whereas since he condemned the massacres of 16th 17th July 2020 in Kipupu, South Kivu Dr Mukwege has been the victim of death threats through social media, phone calls and direct messages; whereas his family and personnel of the Panzi hospital have been victims of similar threats to their lives;
- F. Whereas following the 2012 attack, United Nations (UN) peacekeepers ensured Dr Mukwege's safety at Panzi hospital; whereas the UN protection was suspended in May 2020 due to a COVID-19 outbreak amongst the peacekeepers;
- G. Whereas the European Parliament, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, different national and international institutions and organizations did publicly demanded the Congolese authorities to undertake criminal investigations concerning the ongoing threats targeting Dr Mukwege and the reinstatement of the peacekeepers protection detail;
- H. Whereas on 10 September 2020 the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo announced that the peacekeepers protection was reinstated and redeployed with the mission to protect Dr Mukwege and ensure the security of Panzi hospital; whereas the United Nations expressed its commitment to continue the training of the Congolese counterparts in order to enable a standing and long-term security solution;
- I. Whereas human rights defenders and their families are systematically victims of death threats and arbitrary arrests in the Kivu Province in DRC;
- J. whereas human rights defender Josué Aruna, Bukavu-based provincial president of Société Civile Environnementale et Agro-Rurale du Congo, is the target of death threats since he has denounced illegal exploitation and trade of red wood in South Kivu province August 2020;
- K. whereas several human rights defenders and members of the citizens' movement Lutte pour le Changement (LUCHA) were arbitrarily arrested on 21 July 2020 in Kalehe (South Kivu) for denouncing the theft of public street lighting to combat insecurity; whereas human rights defender and LUCHA member Lucien Byamungu Munganga was arbitrarily arrested in Kalehe (South Kivu) while he was peacefully protesting for

their release, and is currently in detention at Kalehe central prison;

1. Commends Dr Mukwege's for his constant commitment to denounce and fight the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict over the last decades; commends the invaluable work done at the Panzi hospital by Dr Mukwege and staff which significantly impacts on the lives of women and girls victims of rapes and war crimes;
2. Stresses the importance of his stance against human rights violations and abuses committed in Democratic Republic of the Congo;
3. Condemns the life threats made against Dr Mukwege, his family and the staff of Panzi hospital;
4. Urges the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to undertake a comprehensive investigation into the threats made through social media, phone calls and direct messages targeting Dr Mukwege, his family and the Panzi hospital staff, and to take urgent and concrete measures to fully protect them;
5. Praises the United Nations decision to reinstate and redeploy its security forces with the long-term commitment to protect Dr Mukwege and ensure the security of Panzi hospital;
6. Alongside Doctor Mukwege's call, urges the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to establish a mechanism for justice and accountability for those responsible for human rights violations documented in the UN Mapping Report as well as other serious crimes under international law and humanitarian law committed in the DRC;
7. Reiterates its concern at the humanitarian and security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; insists that the authorities in DRC abandon and terminate all forms of harassment, including at a judicial level, against all human rights defenders and activists;
8. Supports all human rights defenders in the Democratic Republic of Congo who still carry out their legitimate and peaceful human rights work despite the difficult context they face;
9. Strongly condemns the death threats against Josué Aruna, and arbitrary arrests of Lucien Byamungu Munganga and fellow LUCHA members and calls for their unconditional and immediate release;
10. Urges the European Union and the international community to increase support to, and protection of, human rights defenders; strongly urges the Congolese authorities to investigate and bring to justice those who attack human rights defenders and repress democratic protests;
11. Calls on the HR/VP, EU delegation and EU missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo to increase their visible support to human rights defenders at risk in DRC, including via social media, as a protection measure to provide recognition to their

human rights work and acknowledge their important role as human rights defenders in fighting for stability and peace in the region;

12. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the European Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers and Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, and the President, Prime Minister and Parliament of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.