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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0131/2021**

9.2.2021

## **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 Rwanda, the case of Paul Rusesabagina  
(2021/2543(RSP))

**Katrin Langensiepen, Francisco Guerreiro, Erik Marquardt, Bronis Ropė, Monika Vana, Hannah Neumann, Ignazio Corrao, Jordi Solé, Diana Riba i Giner, Rosa D'Amato, Henrike Hahn, Caroline Roose, Sara Matthieu, Piernicola Pedicini, Alviina Alametsä, Heidi Hautala, Tineke Strik**  
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**B9-0131/2021**

**European Parliament resolution on on Rwanda, the case of Paul Rusesabagina  
(2021/2543(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- Having regard to its previous resolutions on Rwanda,
- Having regard its resolution of 28 November 2019 on the ongoing negotiations for a new Partnership Agreement between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which was ratified by Rwanda in 1975,
- having regard to the United Nations and the African Commission on Human and People's Rights instruments, in particular, the Principles and Guidelines on the Right to a Fair Trial and Legal Assistance in Africa,
- having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, of the 4th February 1985,
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
- having regard to the United Nations Basic Principles for Treatment of Prisoners,
- having regard to the Kampala Declaration on Prison Conditions in Africa,
- having regard to the 2014 report on Rwanda of the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association,
- having regard to the outcome of the 2015 Universal Periodic Review of Rwanda and to the 2016 concluding observation of the UN Human Rights Committee after its review of Rwanda's compliance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States, of the one part, and the European Community and its Member States, of the other part, signed in Cotonou on 23 June 2000, and particularly to Annex VII thereto, which calls for the promotion of human rights, democracy based on the rule of law and transparent and accountable governance,
- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. whereas Paul Rusesabagina was managing director of luxury Hotel “Des Milles Collines”, where he reportedly offered shelter and protection to 1268 Tutsis and moderate Hutus, who were fleeing the genocide atrocities in 1994;
- B. whereas Paul Rusesabagina, has been involved in opposition politics in diaspora for many years and has been critical of the ruling Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) government’s record; whereas he is the founder of the PDR-Ihumure political party and president of the coalition of heterogeneous opposition groups Rwanda Movement for Democratic Change (MRCD); whereas the PDR-Ihumure considered itself responsible for the international diplomatic relations;
- C. whereas following threats and intimidation by the Rwandan authorities, Mr. Rusesabagina and his family left Rwanda to Belgium in 1996, and obtained Belgian nationality a year later; whereas he is also permanent resident in the United States and founded there the NGO the Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation, to promote peace in Africa and support victims of the genocide; whereas since 2007, the Rwandese Government and its officials have reportedly been blocking the activities of this organisation;
- D. whereas Mr. Rusesabagina has been forcibly transferred from Dubai to Kigali on 27th August 2020 under unclear circumstances; whereas UAE authorities deny any involvement in his transfer and subsequent arrest;
- E. whereas he was held *incommunicado* and denied any contact with the external world, from his arrest in Rwanda on 28 August and until 7 September 2020; whereas he has been arrested under charges of serious crimes including terrorism, arson, kidnap and murder, perpetrated against unarmed innocent Rwandan civilians on Rwandan territory, notably in Nyabimata-Nyaruguru district in June 2018 and in Nyungwe-Nyamagabe district in December 2018;
- F. whereas there are serious concerns about Mr Rusesabagina medical condition and whether as he is provided with the necessary medication for his blood pressure and cardiovascular condition; whereas Kigali is under a two week COVID-19 lockdown and the prison in which Paul Rusesabagina is held is considered as the one with the worst infection rates in the country;
- G. Whereas the European Development Fund allocates 460 million Euros to Rwanda for the period 2014-2020; whereas Rwanda signed the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the East African Community in 2016 and the ratification process is ongoing;

- H. whereas in spite of the growth of Rwandan economy at an average rate of 8% the last 10 years, the country ranks 158th out of 189th countries in the Human Development Index as a LDC according to the OECD classification;
- I. whereas the national constitution grants extensive rights to women with them holding 49 out of 80 seats in the national Parliament, the highest rate in the world;
- J. whereas Paul Kagame, president of Rwanda since 2000 would be allowed to remain in his position until 2034, thanks to the constitutional reform he initiated in 2015; whereas the opposition is poorly represented, operates partially from abroad and its leaders are victims of arrests, intimidation and alleged assassination; whereas the situation slightly improved in 2018 with the release of 2000 prisoners including opposition leaders Victoire Ingabire and Diane Rwigara;
- K. whereas political rights and civil liberties are not respected in Rwanda according to the latest Freedom in the World Index 2019 which rates Rwanda as ‘Not Free’; whereas Reporters Without Borders ranked Rwanda 155th out of 180 countries with journalists being censored and due to a tough criminal code on defamation;
- L. whereas famous singer critical of the government Kizito Mihigo, first imprisoned from 2014 to 2018 and arrested again in 2020 has been found dead in his cells in February 2020;
- M. whereas in 2017, the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture suspended a visit to Rwanda as they were prevented from carrying out private and confidential interviews with some detainees, and due to risks of reprisals on those they would talk to;
1. Strongly condemns the regular occurrence of politically motivated trials in Rwanda, the disappearance and death in custody of governmental critics and human right defenders reported intimidation and transnational repression of own nationals in the diaspora;
  2. Urges the Rwandan Government to conduct transparent, credible and independent investigations into allegations of extrajudicial killings, deaths in custody, enforced disappearances and torture, and bring perpetrators to justice; calls on Rwanda to implement the countries’ recommendations from the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) at the Human Rights Council in Geneva on January 25, 2021.
  3. Is strongly concerned as regards the politically motivated nature of the investigation and trial against Paul Rusesabagina and the absence of standards of a fair trial,
  4. Urges the Rwandan government to ensure that Paul Rusesabagina is provided rapidly with a fair trial complying with international standards and that he has access to legal counsel of his choice;

5. Calls on the Rwandan authorities to cooperate in undertaking thorough, independent and impartial investigations into the alleged forced transfer of Paul Rusesabagina from EAU to Rwanda and his subsequent arrest;
6. Urges the Rwandan authorities not to aggravate the already highly difficult detention conditions and to provide Paul Rusesabagina with the appropriate medical care, even more as exposure to COVID-19 put his life at significant risk; calls on to further ensure that all prisoners benefit from adequate health care, including access to testing, prevention and treatment of COVID-19;
7. Urges the Rwandan authorities to ensure an independent, impartial and effective investigation into the death of Kizito Mihigo, who died in custody under unclear circumstances on 17 February 2020 and bring to justice all those suspected to be responsible where there is sufficient admissible evidence;
8. Calls on the Rwandan government to respect the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights including the right to life and physical integrity, freedom of association and freedom of assembly,
9. Calls on the Rwandan Government to ratify the Convention against Enforced Disappearances, ensure its full implementation into national law and recognize the competence of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances to receive and consider communications from or on behalf of victims or other states parties;
10. Urges Rwandan authorities to allow the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to resume its visits and encourages the government to cooperate in these investigations;
11. Reminds the Rwandan government that sufficient political space and a climate of free expression are preconditions for the organisation of free and fair elections and essential to sustain Rwanda's development and political stability; calls on the government to engage with the opposition throughout its mandate and towards next presidential elections in 2024;
12. Calls on the Rwandan authorities to urgently proceed with the review of its declaration allowing individuals and NGOs to file complaints at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and restore and reintroduce it;
13. Calls on the European Commission, the EEAS and Member states involved for immediate action to ensure proper investigation into the legality of the arrest and trial of Mr Rusesabagina, and to guarantee that his rights as European citizen are respected throughout this process;
14. Asks the European Commission to critically review EU support to Rwandan government institutions to ensure that this support fully promotes human rights and has no negative effects on freedom of expression and association, political pluralism and independent civil society;

15. Reiterates its call for the systematic inclusion of enforceable sustainable development and human rights provisions in all currently negotiated and future Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), and for an in-depth analysis on the impact of EPAs on local economies, and intra-regional trade in order to address concerns regarding their implementation in terms of regional integration and industrialisation;
16. 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, the Commission, the governments and the parliaments of the Member States, the EEAS, the Government and Parliament of Rwanda, the African Union Commission, the Pan-African Parliament and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.