



Plenary sitting

B9-0133/2021

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))

Hilde Vautmans, Barry Andrews, Petras Auštrevičius, Dita Charanzová, Vlad Gheorghe, Klemen Grošelj, Bernard Guetta, Svenja Hahn, Karin Karlsbro, Moritz Körner, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Nathalie Loiseau, Javier Nart, Dragoș Pîslaru, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Michal Šimečka, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Ramona Strugariu, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Dragoș Tudorache, Malik Azmani, Urmas Paet
on behalf of the Renew Group

B9-0133/2021

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

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
- having regard to 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,
- having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
- having regard to the outcome of the Universal Periodic Review of Rwanda on 25 January 2021 at the Human Rights Council in Geneva,
- having regard to the Human Rights Watch statement entitled 'Rwanda: Rusesabagina was forcibly disappeared' of 10 September 2020,
- having regard to the Human Rights Watch statement entitled 'UN: Countries call out Rwanda's rights record' of 1 February 2021,
- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,

- A. whereas, according to Human Rights Watch, the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) continuously target those perceived as a threat to the government; whereas high-profile government critics and journalists are arrested or threatened, both inside and outside Rwanda;
- B. whereas Rwanda has a Global Freedom Score of 22/100 and is considered as not free; whereas according to a special report of Freedom House , Rwandan transnational repression is exceptionally broad in terms of tactics, targets and geographic reach and includes digital threats, spyware attacks, family intimidation and harassment, mobility controls, rendition and assassination; whereas according to Freedom House, the government has physically targeted Rwandans in at least seven countries since 2014;
- C. whereas Paul Rusesabagina was the managing director of the Hotel "Des Mille Collines" in Kigali during the genocide in 1994 who offered shelter and protection to 1268 Tutsis and moderate Hutus who were fleeing from the killing; whereas Paul Rusesabagina is an internationally acknowledged human rights hero whose story was told in the film Hotel

Rwanda; whereas for his laudable role he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2005, the highest civilian award in the US, by then-president George W. Bush;

- D. whereas Paul Rusesabagina is a fierce opponent of the current Rwandan government and co-founded the opposition Rwandan Movement for Democratic Change (MRCD); whereas Mister Rusesabagina is a regular critic of human rights violations in Rwanda; whereas Rusesabagina fled Rwanda in 1996 following an assassination attempt and obtained asylum in Belgium before becoming a Belgian citizen and thus a EU citizen; whereas he is also a permanent resident of the United States;
- E. whereas Paul Rusesabagina claims that his movements were closely monitored by Rwandan government operatives and that the Rwandan government physically threatened him after he had criticized Kagame's repressive policies; whereas Rusesabagina's prominence and the way his account of the genocide diverge from the official narrative is a threat for the Rwandan government;
- F. whereas on 27 August 2020, Paul Rusesabagina has been forcibly transferred from Dubai to Kigali under uncertain circumstances and only reappeared on 31 August 2020 at the Rwandan Investigation Bureau (RIB) headquarters; whereas a lawful detention and transfer of a suspect from one country to another to face criminal proceedings should be accomplished through extradition proceedings, overseen by an independent tribunal;
- G. whereas Paul Rusesabagina is currently detained in Rwanda facing terrorism related charges; whereas Mister Rusesabagina is denied access to legal counsel of his choosing; whereas Mister Rusesabagina's indictment, casefile and other documents necessary for the preparation of his defence were confiscated on 23 December 2020 by the Prison Director of Mageragere Prison;
- H. whereas the family of Rusesabagina is extremely concerned about his medical condition as he is a cancer survivor and suffers from a cardiovascular disorder for which he takes prescribed medication; whereas the medication his family sent via the diplomatic pouch of the Belgian Embassy in Rwanda was reportedly never administered to Mister Rusesabagina; whereas he receives medication prescribed by a Rwandan doctor without knowing what kind of drug it incorporates;
- I. whereas Mr Rusesabagina's daughter and former colleagues are reportedly being harassed by a person claiming to be a prison guard, who is urging their involvement in (and funding for) a plot to help him escape from prison;

1. Strongly condemns the enforced disappearance, illegal rendition and the incommunicado detention of Paul Rusesabagina and calls for his immediate release;
2. Calls on the Rwandan government to show its willingness to conduct transparent, credible and independent investigations, and provide a complete and corroborated account of how Paul Rusesabagina was apprehended and transferred to Kigali;
3. Urges the Rwandan authorities to allow Mister Rusesabagina a fair and public hearing by a competent, independent and impartial tribunal applying international human rights norms; recalls the Rwandan authorities that Mr Rusesabagina has the right to be assisted by a lawyer of his own choice and the right to defend himself; recalls the legal principle of presumption of innocence;
4. Expresses its deep concerns at the medical condition of Paul Rusesabagina; calls on the Rwandan government to ensure appropriate medical assistance and allow Mister

Rusesabagina to take his usual medication; calls on the Rwandan government to allow his medical situation to be monitored by a doctor in Belgium, as requested by the Belgian Foreign Minister on 4 February 2021;

5. Recalls that Rwandan authorities failed to conduct a credible and transparent investigation into the suspicious death in police custody of Kizito Mihigo, a Rwandan singer, in February 2020 as well as the suspicious death of Patrick Karegeya, Rwanda's former spy chief and later a critic in exile, who was murdered in a Johannesburg hotel on January 1, 2014; 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;
6. Strongly condemns politically motivated trials, the prosecution of political opponents and the prejudging of the outcome of the trial; urges the Rwandan authorities to ensure the separation of administrative, legislative and judicial powers, in particular the independence of the judiciary; calls on Rwanda to open its political space and improve its human rights record; expects Rwanda to implement the recommendations of the country's Universal Periodic Review at the Human Rights Council in Geneva from 25 January 2021;
7. Calls on the Rwandan Government to ratify the Convention against Enforced Disappearances and the Rome Statute to become a party to the International Criminal Court; urges Rwanda to allow the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment to resume its visits;
8. Recalls the recently approved EU Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime, a mechanism for monitoring and sanctioning the serious violations of human rights, targeting individuals, entities and bodies involved in or associated with serious human rights violations;
9. Calls for immediate action by the European Union to ensure that the legality of the arrest and trial of Mr Rusesabagina are investigated and that his rights as a European citizen are upheld at all stages of this process;
10. 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 Member States, the UN Secretary-General, the institutions of the African Union, the East African Community, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the defenders of Paul Rusesabagina and the President of Rwanda.