



Plenary sitting

B9-0134/2021

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))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

B9-0134/2021

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

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Rwanda,
 - having regard to the OHCHR letters of 30 September 2020 to the Governments of Rwanda and of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the mandates of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, and the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism,
 - having regard to the reply of the Permanent Mission of the UAE in Geneva of 21 December 2020,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR),
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
 - having regard to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,
 - having regard to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;
 - having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas Paul Rusesabagina was managing director of the Hotel des Mille Collines, where he offered shelter to 1268 Tutsis and moderate Hutus during the genocide atrocities in Rwanda in 1994;

B. whereas in 1996, following alleged threats and intimidation by the Rwandan authorities, Paul Rusesabagina and his family sought refuge in Belgium, and later obtained Belgian nationality; whereas he is also a permanent resident in the USA where he was awarded in 2005 the Presidential Medal of Freedom;

C. whereas in 2006, Mr. Rusesabagina founded a non-governmental organisation called “the Hotel Rwanda Rusesabagina Foundation”, in Chicago, USA, 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 foundation, making false

accusations against Mr. Rusesabagina in the media; whereas they have been suspected of break-ins into his house in Belgium where only documents in Kinyarwanda language were taken;

D. whereas Paul Rusesabagina has been outspokenly criticising the Rwandese authorities and has co-founded the *Mouvement Rwandais pour le Changement Democratique* (MRCD), a coalition of opposition groups in exile;

E. whereas on 27 August 2020, Paul Rusesabagina travelled from the USA to Dubai in the UAE; whereas after having contacted his family the night of his arrival to Dubai he went missing for four days, until 31 August 2020, when he was paraded in front of the media at the Rwandan Investigation Bureau (RIB) headquarters; whereas he is currently detained in Rwanda facing terrorism related charges;

F. whereas Paul Rusesabagina was forcibly transferred from Dubai to Kigali under uncertain circumstances, and whereas the Rwandan authorities have three times adapted their explanation on how he arrived in Kigali;

G. whereas Paul Rusesabagina was initially denied access to a lawyer hired by his family and had to chose two lawyers from a list of state-imposed pro bono advocates;

H. whereas COVID-19 poses a great risk to Paul Rusesabagina given the crowded, unsanitary prison environment and his pre-existing condition of a cancer survivor in remission and his suffering from hypertension and cardiovascular disorders;

I. whereas on 25 January 2021, Rwanda had its Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council, receiving strong recommendations on several key issues, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, arbitrary detention, and deaths in custody and the need to take the necessary steps to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;

1. Requests the immediate release and safe return of Paul Rusesabagina;

2. Has serious concerns about fair trial violations, the circumstances of the transfer of Paul Rusesabagina to Rwanda, the initial period of *incommunicado* detention before he was presented to the media or had legal representation and the denied access to the lawyer appointed by his family during several months and about his medical condition and access to the necessary medicines;

3. Calls on the Rwandan authorities to ensure that Paul Rusesabagina's fair trial rights are guaranteed and that he has access to legal counsel of his own choosing and appropriate medical care;

4. Urges the Rwandan authorities to come clear on the circumstances of the arrest of Paul Rusesabagina and on what exactly happened between 27 August and 31 August 2020;

5. Asks the Rwandan authorities to promptly adhere to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, implement it fully 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;

6. Calls on the Rwandan authorities to ensure that all cases of enforced disappearance are thoroughly and impartially investigated and that all those suspected of criminal responsibility are brought to justice in fair trials;
7. 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 UN Secretary General, the institutions of the African Union, the East African Community, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the President of Rwanda.