



Plenary sitting

B9-0466/2022

14.10.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Burkina Faso following the coup d'état
(2022/2865(RSP))

François Alfonsi, Hannah Neumann, Jordi Solé, Ignazio Corrao, Malte Gallée, Mounir Satouri, Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana, Francisco Guerreiro

on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Burkina Faso following the coup d'état
(2022/2865(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Burkina Faso,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to the Universal declaration on Human Rights,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
 - having regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,
 - having regard to the Agenda 2063 of the African Union (AU),
 - having regard to the Partnership Agreement between the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific 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,
 - having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe¹,
 - having regard to Regulation (EU) 2017/2306 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 amending Regulation (EU) No 230/2014 establishing an instrument contributing to stability and peace,
 - having regard to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly resolution of 20 June 2018 on the urgency of new measures to fight international terrorism²,
 - having regard to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly resolution of 15 June 2016 on rape and violence against women and children in armed conflicts³,
 - having regard to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly resolution of 19 June 2013 on the threats posed again by military coups to democracy and political stability in the ACP countries, and the role of the international community,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 30 September Burkina Faso suffered its second military seizure of power in nearly nine months; whereas Captain Ibrahim Traoré overthrew Lieutenant-Colonel

¹ OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p. 1.

² OJ C 415, 15.11.2018, p. 18.

³ OJ C 451, 2.12.2016, p. 46.

Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba, who himself came to power by force on 24 January 2022 by overthrowing the elected president Roch Marc Christian Kaboré;

- B. whereas Colonel Damiba did not at first agree to resign from his position, but agreed to do so on 2 October and subsequently departed from Burkina Faso to Togo; whereas on 5 October, Traoré was appointed president of the country by his peers from the Mouvement Patriotique pour la Restauration de l'Etat (MPSR); whereas Captain Traoré has committed to respecting the two-year transitional calendar back to elected civilian government agreed to by his predecessor and to hold 'national meetings' before the end of the year to designate a new president;
- C. whereas the constitution first suspended after 30 September was reinstated by the 'Fundamental Act', adopted by the MSPR on 5 October, which guarantees Burkina Faso's respect for international treaties and agreements to which the country is a party. as well as the continuity of the state pending the adoption of a transitional charter;
- D. whereas shortly after his seizure of power Captain Traoré indicated that he would only deal with 'current affairs' until the appointment of a new transitional civilian or military president by 'national conferences'; whereas according to captain Traoré these meetings, which aim to bring together political, social and civil society forces, should meet well before the end of the year; whereas Captain Traoré decided by decree that a first national conference would be convened on 14 and 15 October in Ouagadougou with a view to the adoption of the transitional charter;
- E. whereas in the weekend following the ousting of Colonel Damiba, demonstrations against France and in favour of increased military cooperation with Russia erupted; whereas French embassy and Alliance Française buildings in Ouagadougou were violently attacked by demonstrators;
- F. Whereas ahead of the first seize of power of January 2022, discontent and criticism from civilians, the opposition and the military had already been growing over President Kaboré's lack of capacity to effectively implement solutions to the enormous security, social and economic challenges in the country caused by the spread of violent attacks by terrorist groups;
- G. whereas the discontent and frustration of military troops kept growing even after the first military takeover in January 2022 due to their insufficient resources for fighting violent extremism; whereas the military forces responsible for the recent seizure of power blamed Colonel Damiba for his actions' lack of efficiency in combating the terrorist threat in the country; whereas so far the lack of a cohesive security sector has seriously undermined Burkina Faso's capacity to deal with the urgent problem of violent extremism;
- H. whereas on 26 September, an Al-Qaeda affiliated group claimed responsibility for an attack on a supply convoy near Gaskindé that resulted in the deaths of 27 soldiers and 10 civilians; whereas this latest attack is considered to be one of the triggers for the recent military takeover;
- I. whereas the second military takeover has been denounced by the international community, including the EU, the UN, the Economic Community of West African

States (ECOWAS) and the AU, which have all reaffirmed their firm opposition to any seizure of power by non-constitutional means and the force of arms;

- J. whereas following its mission to assess the situation in Burkina Faso, the ECOWAS mediator for Burkina Faso, Mahamadou Issoufou, stated that the mission had felt 'confident' after meeting Traoré; whereas ECOWAS indicated it will continue monitoring Burkina Faso's transition to constitutional rule and reiterated its call on the new military authority to respect the timetable agreed with its predecessors to return to constitutional rule by 1 July 2024;
- K. whereas attacks by extremist Islamist groups linked to Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara have killed several thousand people and displaced an estimated 1.5 million in Burkina Faso since 2015; whereas in 2018 violence by Islamist armed groups worsened, with these groups increasingly targeting civilians and capturing towns and territory; whereas Islamist armed groups in the country killed more than 350 civilians and kidnapped hundreds of others in 2021;
- L. whereas an attack on Seytenga in June 2022 prompted almost 16 000 people to leave their homes; whereas in June 2021, 174 people died in the villages of Solhan and Tadaryat in the deadliest attack since 2015; whereas on 4 November 2021, an attack by Islamist groups on the gendarmerie garrison in Inata in northern Burkina Faso killed 53 soldiers; whereas Human Rights Watch reported summary executions of hundreds of suspects by security forces and pro-government militias, and whereas virtually none of these attacks have been investigated or prosecuted;
- M. whereas the escalating violence has resulted in Burkina Faso becoming one of the fastest-growing displacement and protection crises in the world, with at least 1.9 million people having been displaced; whereas more than 19 000 Burkinabe have fled to Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger and Benin; whereas the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) rose to over 1.5 million last year, a 50 % increase, which is among the highest proportions of IDPs in the continent; whereas among IDPs, threats to women and youth are particularly severe, including sexual and labour exploitation, gender-based violence, forced recruitment and trafficking;
- N. whereas the presence of IDPs and refugees may lead to conflict with the local population over scarce natural resources if no adequate measures are taken to provide housing, employment and food; whereas the resulting resource conflicts threaten to further contribute to the cycle of violence in the country;
- O. whereas Burkina Faso ranks among the 10 poorest countries in the world; whereas access to sanitation and electricity is poor, while investment in education and infrastructure is insufficient;
- P. whereas the Sahel region, to which Burkina Faso belongs, remains on the frontline of the climate emergency, with temperatures increasing at 1.5 times faster than the global average, which in particular causes the northern region's rapid desertification and resulting water shortages, soil degradation and resource scarcity; whereas in August 2022, the United Nations increased the estimated number of Burkinabe in need of humanitarian aid by 40 %, to 4.9 million, including 3.4 million people who facing severe food insecurity;

- Q. whereas the burden of debt contributes to the threat to the overall stability of countries in the Sahel and West African regions;
 - R. whereas the capacity to address these security challenges has been further weakened by the COVID-19 pandemic;
 - S. whereas more than EUR 1 billion have been allocated to Burkina Faso for the period 2014-2020 through all the European Union's funding instruments;
 - T. whereas between 2016 and 2021 the national budget for defence and security grew from EUR 240 million to EUR 650 million – an increase of more than 270 %; whereas this spending failed to improve the living conditions or operational capacity of soldiers, partly owing to rampant financial mismanagement;
 - U. whereas the G5 Sahel is facing challenges to achieving its objectives and maintaining public support as well as to compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law when deployed; whereas EU-financed activities for conflict prevention, mediation, dialogue and reconciliation are still limited;
 - V. whereas within the last 12 months, Chad, Mali, Guinea and Burkina Faso have all fallen under the de facto control of the military;
1. Expresses its concern about this second unconstitutional seizure of power in Burkina Faso perpetrated by the armed forces nearly only nine months after the first military takeover on 24 January; stresses that constitutional order must be maintained; calls for the already agreed period for political transition to be respected, and for the holding of free, democratic and transparent elections; insists that a self-appointed government without a democratic mandate undermines efforts to strengthen the rule of law and accountability;
 2. Expresses deep concern about the state of democracy in the Sahel region and the recent coups d'état in the region; calls on all coup leaders to either set clear limits on the duration of the political transition or respect those established;
 3. calls on the military leadership to fulfil Burkina Faso's international commitments, including full respect for human rights and combating terrorist organisations in close partnership with the international community;
 4. Reiterates its support for ECOWAS and the AU in their efforts to mediate this crisis; calls on the international community, including the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission, to continue to maintain a dialogue with the Burkinabe authorities to ensure a timely and democratic transition to a civilian led-government; calls on the authorities of Burkina Faso to identify clear timelines and processes for conducting inclusive and transparent elections as soon as possible;
 5. Underlines its support for a true and honest national dialogue, involving all sectors of civil society, in order to outline a clear future vision for Burkinabe democracy; including concrete objectives jointly agreed and shared by the various non-military and non-state actors; calls on the international community to help facilitate such dialogue;

6. Calls for the increased inclusion and active participation of women in democratic decision-making at all levels and in peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts; condemns the use of sexual violence and intimidation of all forms in conflict situations; notes in particular the importance of closely involving women in peace processes as well as conflict prevention and resolution strategies, given that they are disproportionately affected by insecurity and violence, particularly in conflict situations;
7. Urges the authorities to ensure the protection of human rights defenders and civil society organisations in the exercise of their mandate, including denouncing human rights violations, police blunders and excessive use of force; calls for the EU and its Member States to increase their protection and support for human rights defenders in Burkina Faso, and where appropriate, facilitate the issuing of emergency visas, and to provide temporary shelter in the EU Member States;
8. Urges Burkinabe authorities to respect and protect the people's rights to freedom of assembly, association and expression and the rights of minorities, as well as press and media freedom, in compliance with international standards; urges all parties in Burkina Faso to uphold the freedom of the press to ensure that domestic and international media organisations can freely carry out their work, including documenting the situation of IDPs and security force operations;
9. Reaffirms that acts of terrorism are crimes and unjustifiable regardless of the motives for them or of where, when or who committed them; stresses that it is essential for all perpetrators of such human rights violations and abuses to be brought to justice, regardless of their affiliation, and for them to be held accountable for their actions;
10. Stresses the importance of redefining a strategy for combating terrorism and violent extremism throughout the country while respecting the rule of law and fundamental rights, in accordance with obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law;
11. Encourages the new authorities in Burkina Faso to break from past practices that have fuelled tensions and divisions in the army, police and other security structures; underlines that the upcoming national consultation to adopt a new transition charter is an opportunity to include substantial security sector reform among priorities for the transition and facilitate the adoption of the draft national security strategy and national security legislation which puts the security needs of the entire population at its centre, is based on human security and compliance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law; urges ECOWAS countries and the EU to jointly develop a new approach that will lead to a comprehensive security sector reform and security assistance;
12. Acknowledges that the various international missions have not accomplished their primary goal of a lasting peace in the Sahel region and thus that a reflection process about the mandates and role of international missions and policies in the Sahel is needed; underlines that a revision of the EU's mandates and engagements should focus on increasing the preventive nature of our cooperation with the region, including in Burkina Faso;
13. Calls on the EU and its Member States to step up their support to stop the escalation of

violence in Burkina Faso and the Sahel region; underscores that the security of the local population should be the guiding principle of EU security sector reform and assistance efforts in fragile countries and regions; deplores the fact that, according to the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), G5 Sahel security forces have committed war crimes in the region and underlines the urgent need for accountability at all levels, justice, mediation and reconciliation;

14. Recalls that NDICI-Global Europe does not support financing of certain operations linked to the military or state security sector or that might result in human rights violations in partners countries;
15. Calls on all EU Member States to live up to their human rights obligations and refrain from any arms transfers that could fuel human rights violations in Burkina Faso and the Sahel;
16. Stresses that each of the recent military takeovers in Africa has its internal dynamics and own individual context, but in most cases coup leaders have often taken advantage of social and interethnic unrest, grievances about corruption and the failure of governments to respect basic rights, uphold constitutional obligations, and carry out promised reforms;
17. Recalls that the situation in Burkina Faso has a direct impact on its neighbouring states; calls on the Burkinabe authorities to further intensify their cooperation with neighbouring states, especially with regard to the country's northern regions and the states directly affected by the violence, such as Mali and Niger; calls for international coordination throughout the region with the political objectives of safeguarding territorial integrity, democratic institutions and the security of all citizens and their properties;
18. Stresses that security is vital, but that it is not the only answer to the challenges that Burkina Faso is facing, and that, therefore, coordination between security, climate and development policies is one of the essential challenges;
19. Urges the EU and the countries of West and Sahelian Africa to ensure judicial actions, including criminal sanctions, for human rights violations resulting from the activities of private military and security companies; believes that the EU should terminate all security and military assistance to countries that undertake activities with persons and companies affiliated with the Wagner Group; condemns the crimes committed by the Wagner Group and other private military and security companies;
20. Underlines that, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the current conflict in Ukraine is shining a spotlight on the vulnerabilities of the global food system; urges the EU, therefore, to safeguard Burkina Faso's right to food sovereignty as a means of achieving nutritional security and poverty reduction, devoting particular attention to women and family farming, with the aim of securing the supply of affordable and accessible food; stresses that finding agronomic alternatives to expensive synthetic fertiliser can be the most cost-effective policy option for Burkina Faso, and recalls, in this regard, the EU Farm to Fork Strategy's intention to reduce farmers' dependency on synthetic fertilisers;
21. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to urgently evaluate, in coordination

with their international partners and relevant international institutions, all the means available to avoid any debt default by Burkina Faso and African countries in general, including direct funding and restructuring of their debt; urges the EU and its Member States to develop, as a first step and in addition to its pledges on a debt moratorium, a new debt relief initiative regarding heavily indebted poor countries; calls, more broadly, for the creation of a multilateral debt workout mechanism to address both the impact of the crisis and the financing requirements of the 2030 Agenda; stresses the importance of prioritising grant-based financing as the default option, especially for least developed countries;

22. Calls on the international community including the European Union to provide support for a credible political transition that respects the people's desire for democracy and peace; calls on the EU and Member States, in this regard, to maintain dialogue with the Burkinabe authorities throughout the transition process until there is clear and verifiable evidence of a return to constitutional order; stresses that this dialogue should aim to establish a roadmap based on concrete objectives jointly agreed with the whole of Burkina Faso's political class and civil society;
23. Believes that the EU must work with ECOWAS, the transitional authorities and all stakeholders in Burkina Faso to strengthen development, education and climate change adaptation efforts in order to tackle poverty and prevent further radicalisation; stresses that climate change is a major risk multiplier for conflict, drought, famine and displacement;
24. Expresses particular concern over the impact of security threats on the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance and development cooperation; urges the Member States and the international community to increase their humanitarian assistance to Burkina Faso, especially for displaced persons and refugees in neighbouring countries and in particular through the provision of food, water and medical services; warns that not fulfilling the basic needs (such as food, water, shelter and healthcare) of displaced persons and hosting communities, including women and children, will only further fuel the already critical humanitarian situation;
25. Calls on the international community to continue supporting Burkina Faso in addressing the deteriorating security situation and prevailing socioeconomic challenges facing the country, fully aware of the fact that only a lasting reform of the structural dynamics underlying the current challenges in the country can guarantee lasting stability and development;
26. Urges the Commission, the EEAS and the Member States to continue prioritising support to judicial and security sector reform in Burkina Faso to ensure that sufficient resources and technical assistance are provided for a root-and-branch reform of the security sector, transparent and constructive cooperation between a civilian government and the military, and renewed efforts to tackle corruption;
27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the authorities of Burkina Faso, the institutions of the African Union, the Economic

Community of West African States, the United Nations Secretary-General, the United Nations General Assembly, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the PAN-African Parliament.