



Plenary sitting

B9-0467/2022

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))

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on behalf of the PPE 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, in particular that of 17 February 2022¹ on the political crisis in Burkina Faso, as well as to its previous resolutions on the Sahel and Western Africa,
- having regard to the debate in the European Parliament of 4 October 2022,
- having regard to the statement of 1 October 2022 by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on the coup d'état,
- having regard to the statement of 5 October 2022 by the VP/HR on Burkina Faso,
- having regard to the statement of 7 October 2022 by the UN Security Council,
- having regard to the statement of 30 September 2022 by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, condemning the second takeover of power by force in Burkina Faso,
- having regard to the statements of 30 September, 1 October and 2 October 2022 by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on Burkina Faso,
- having regard to the ECOWAS mission to Burkina Faso on 4 October 2022,
- having regard to the ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance,
- having regard to the joint communication from the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 9 March 2020 entitled 'Towards a comprehensive Strategy with Africa' (JOIN(2020)0004),
- having regard to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in particular SDG 16 on the promotion of just, peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Burkina Faso,
- 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 (Cotonou

¹ Texts adopted, P9_TA(2022)0051.

Agreement)²,

- having regard to the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance,
 - having regard to the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
 - having regard to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas since 2015, Burkina Faso has been caught up in an escalating spiral of violence attributed to fighters belonging to groups such as the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (JNIM), which is aligned with al-Qaeda, and the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS), an offshoot of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), killing thousands of people and further displacing 2 million, thus making Burkina Faso one of the new epicentres of conflict in the Sahel;
- B. whereas on 30 September 2022 a ‘coup within the coup’ took place in Burkina Faso after Captain Ibrahim Traoré overthrew Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba, who on 24 January 2022 had in turn overthrown President Marc Roch Kaboré, who had been elected in November 2020; whereas Captain Traoré assumed leadership of the Mouvement Patriotique pour la Sauvegarde et la Restauration (MPSR), which Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba had set up after the coup in early 2022;
- C. whereas after the January 2022 coup, under the mediation of ECOWAS, the military agreed to a transition period until July 2024, when democratic elections are to be held; whereas the EU strongly supported ECOWAS in its mediation efforts and made considerable efforts to boost cooperation, including on defence and security; whereas ECOWAS has condemned the latest coup in Burkina Faso and deems it inappropriate in the light of the progress that had been made in efforts to ensure an orderly return to constitutional order by 1 July 2024;
- D. whereas on 1 October 2022, one day after the recent coup, the French embassy and consulate in Ouagadougou, as well as the Institut Français in Ouagadougou and Bobo Dioulasso, were vandalised; whereas similar acts of violence and aggression against other European institutions have been witnessed;
- E. whereas on 2 October, after the mediation of traditional chieftains, Lieutenant-Colonel Damiba tendered his resignation as President; whereas he made his resignation subject to seven conditions, among them the need to uphold the agreement with ECOWAS during a transition period of 24 months; whereas Captain Traoré accepted all of these conditions and Lieutenant-Colonel Damiba then left Burkina Faso to go into exile in

² OJ L 317, 15.12.2000, p. 3.

Togo;

- F. whereas on 4 October 2022, a fact-finding mission by ECOWAS, led by the former President of Niger Mahamadou Issoufou, visited Burkina Faso to hold talks with the new leadership; whereas Captain Traoré subsequently confirmed that he would respect the schedule for the transition and the holding of elections before 1 July 2024;
- G. whereas on 5 October, Captain Traoré was nominated as the new President of the Transition and Chief of the army;
- H. whereas on 7 October, Captain Traoré met all of the diplomatic corps in Ouagadougou to reaffirm his willingness to cooperate with all of Burkina Faso's partners;
- I. whereas Captain Traoré announced that 'National Assises', comprised of all societal actors, would be held on 14 and 15 October in order to decide on a new transitional president and a transitional charter;
- J. whereas Captain Traoré has made statements that Burkina Faso considers the EU as just 'one of many' partners, hinting a possible engagement with actors such as Russia;
- K. whereas Burkina Faso has been faced with a deteriorating security situation for a long time and whereas multiple efforts by its military leadership have not managed to significantly turn the tide; whereas 40 % of the territory is beyond the control of the defence and security forces; whereas more than 2 million internally displaced persons live in Burkina Faso; whereas more than 3.5 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance;
- L. whereas attacks carried out by armed Islamist groups, including killings, summary executions, the rape of civilians and widespread pillaging, are designed to bring about widespread displacement and to foster antagonism locally; whereas in addition to the mass killings of civilians, armed Islamist groups have launched targeted attacks to abduct, beat and rape women and young girls gathering firewood, travelling to and from the market or fleeing attacks on their village; whereas armed Islamist groups have reportedly recruited child soldiers, some as young as 12, to fight within their ranks;
- M. whereas numerous terrorist attacks, notably on 21 and 27 May, 12 June and most recently on 26 September 2022 have led to the deaths of hundreds of civilians and military personnel; whereas, according to the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2022, sub-Saharan Africa is becoming the global epicentre of terrorism, with the Sahel as the region with the fastest-growing terrorist groups, led by the Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), which has become the world's deadliest terrorist group, with Burkina Faso massively affected by terrorist attacks;
- N. whereas around 4.9 million people are faced with food insecurity and roughly 600 000 are threatened by famine; whereas only roughly 44 % of the country's population has access to drinking water; whereas Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is an additional threat to food security;
- O. whereas Burkina Faso is of key regional importance, as it is strategically located as a

bridge between the Sahel and the coastal States of Western Africa; whereas Islamist terrorists have already increased their presence further south towards the coastal States;

- P. whereas what happens in the Sahel region matters to both the rest of Africa and Europe; whereas the international community has underestimated the threat of jihadism in the Sahel region and its creeping, insidious influence, which very quickly destroys secular societies in the Sahel with repercussions for Europe in the form of a general erosion of the rule of law, compromised security, increased migration flows, human and drug trafficking and poorer-quality partnerships with African countries;
 - Q. whereas since 2021, the training of Burkinabe personnel has been ongoing in the context of the EU training missions EUTM Mali and EUCAP Sahel;
 - R. whereas the G5 Sahel, launched in 2014 to foster regional stability, has been struggling to stabilise the region and was further challenged by the decision of Mali to withdraw from the G5 in May 2022;
 - S. whereas the Accra Initiative, which aims to prevent the spillover of terrorism from the Sahel and to address transnational organised crime and violent extremism in member countries' border areas, has not been formalised yet;
 - T. whereas Russia, notably via its mercenary Wagner Group, has been trying to increase its presence in the Sahel and, in particular, Mali; whereas after the coup, rumours began circulating about Russia's possible interest in launching activities in Burkina Faso;
 - U. whereas according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED) the Wagner Group is increasingly pursuing civilian targets in Mali and the Central African Republic;
 - V. whereas Burkina Faso did not participate in the votes in international bodies on resolutions condemning the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine;
 - W. whereas EU-Burkina Faso relations have been significant for decades, and whereas EU support during the period 2014-2020 amounted to roughly EUR 1 billion; whereas under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe, EU support is scheduled to amount to EUR 384 million for the period 2021-2024;
1. Expresses its serious concern about the unconstitutional change of government in Burkina Faso on 30 September 2022, and underlines that the second military takeover in Burkina Faso in eight months is a setback for the overall state of democracy and progress in the country; demands the restoration of constitutional order by the Burkinabe military and calls on the defence and security forces to remain committed to their core duties of protecting the population and defending their country's territory, and to make their demands known by non-violent means;
 2. Recalls that the new Burkinabe leadership has to fulfil its international commitments, among others the agreement to pursue the democratic transition and hold elections by 1 July 2024; welcomes, in this regard, the statements by Captain Traoré that he will stick to these commitments;

3. Takes note of the organisation of the ‘National Assises’ but underlines the need for the transparency and inclusiveness of these assemblies; stresses further that their conclusions and decisions must pave the way for national elections which are to be held by July 2024;
4. Expresses its sympathy and condolences to the people of Burkina Faso who have suffered too many violent attacks, often committed by Islamists; underlines that the EU stands ready to accompany the Burkinabe people and the region as a whole on the long path towards peace and prosperity;
5. Underlines that the EU stands with Burkina Faso and its people, and is ready to intensify its engagement; stresses that the Burkinabe leadership must itself create the conditions that would allow for such an enhanced partnership;
6. Strongly underlines that any increased partnership with malign third States, such as Russia and its Wagner Group, would not only endanger any future cooperation with the EU, but would ultimately also be detrimental to the future prospects of the Burkinabe population; points to the very negative track record of Russian engagement in Mali where, as a result of impunity and failed military tactics, the population is now suffering from increased threats by Islamists, as well as human rights violations by Russian mercenaries, and where, in addition, the Russians have also exploited natural and state resources, which has further worsened the overall situation in the country and led to a further deterioration in living conditions for the average citizen;
7. Expresses its full support to ECOWAS and the African Union in relation to mediation efforts in Burkina Faso and expresses its readiness to support these mediation efforts wherever possible;
8. Urges the authorities of Burkina Faso to support the efforts to bring those who have committed serious human rights violations before justice, to ensure that judicial investigations are concluded and that the convicted are sanctioned;
9. Calls on the authorities of Burkina Faso to facilitate the work of humanitarian organisations in Burkina Faso by ensuring that they have unimpeded humanitarian access; calls for the EU and the Member States to alleviate the humanitarian situation in Burkina Faso by supporting local authorities and organisations in establishing shelter for internally displaced persons, ensuring that their rights to health and work are respected and reinstating education for children and young people;
10. Asks the EU and its Member States, when formulating policies on the Sahel, to take account of the essential need to support good governance, civil society, development and investments for a more positive future for Sahelian communities; stresses, however, that without helping to provide security, this support risks being wasted; urges the EU and its Member States to urgently establish renewed and enhanced cooperation for peace and security between Africa and the EU, as envisaged in the Joint Vision for 2030 statement issued at the sixth EU-African Union Summit of 17 and 18 February 2022, in order to face up to the growing security challenges facing the two continents, including the shared goal of combating radicalisation, violent extremism and terrorism; insists that this should be part of a more extensive shift of mindset in EU-Africa relations away from dependency on aid and towards cooperation based on an equal partnership

between Europe and Africa;

11. Condemns all acts of violence and vandalism committed against foreign nationals and institutions; urges the Government of Burkina Faso to develop a long-term strategy aimed at fostering a more inclusive and cohesive society, and to reorganise its security response across the whole country in a manner that respects and protects the fundamental rights of the people and rebuilds public trust;
12. Recognises that Burkina Faso is a country of fundamental importance in terms of regional security, as it is a key link between the Sahel and coastal States of Western Africa; underlines, therefore, the need for the EU to increase its engagement in this key country in order to prevent a further deterioration in regional security;
13. Expresses its concern that the political and security instability and the dire socio-economic and humanitarian situation in Burkina Faso have facilitated the rise of terrorist groups which have wreaked havoc, resulting in the loss of hundreds of innocent lives; stresses that more international engagement is needed to combat this imminent threat and calls for the EU to increase cooperation and support in this crucial field;
14. Acknowledges and pays tribute to the religious and traditional leaders in Burkina Faso who have played a key mediating role and have been active players in denying violence and hatred during the current crisis; calls on the Burkinabe leadership to increase protection for religious minorities, including Christians, who often suffer from violence at the hands of Islamist militants;
15. Encourages the Burkinabe leadership to actively participate in discussions and votes in international organisations condemning the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and to join the majority of the global community in condemning Russia and the war crimes committed by Vladimir Putin;
16. 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 authorities of the Republic of Burkina Faso, the Secretariat of the G5 Sahel, the Co-Chairs of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the Pan-African Parliament, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States.