



Plenary sitting

B9-0578/2022

13.12.2022

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 Military Junta crackdown on peaceful demonstrations in Chad
(2022/2993(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

B9-0578/2022

European Parliament resolution on Military Junta crackdown on peaceful demonstrations in Chad (2022/2993(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolutions of 20 May 2021 “on the situation in Chad” and of 16 September 2020 “on EU-African security cooperation in the Sahel region, West Africa and the Horn of Africa”,
 - having regard to the statement by the EU Delegation in Chad of 19 October,
 - having regard to the 20 October statement by the HR/VP on recent events in Chad,
 - having regard to the 22 August 2022, “Tchad: Déclaration de la porte-parole sur l’ouverture du dialogue national”,
 - having regard to the 8 August 2022, “Chad: Statement by the Spokesperson on the Doha Agreement”,
 - having regard to the African Union, 12 November 2022, “Statement of the Spokesperson of the Chairperson of the AUC following the meeting of the AU PSC held on 11 Nov 2022 on the situation in Chad”,
 - having regard to the African Union, 11 November 2022, “Conclusions following the 1121st meeting of the Peace and Security Council”,
 - 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 Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Chad,
 - having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
 - 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 Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas after the death on 20 April 2021 of the then president, Idriss Déby, his son, Mahamat Déby, was appointed as the new head of state and leader of a transitional military council

- (CMT); whereas the Chadian constitution was suspended in this context;
- B. whereas since the beginning of the political transition, several demonstrations were banned and suppressed by the authorities;
 - C. whereas under an 18-month timetable discussed with the African Union (AU) in April 2021, national dialogue talks were meant to facilitate the transition from the military-led government to civilian rule and allow the holding of elections by 20 October 2022;
 - D. whereas the AU issued conditions, including the rejection of any extension of the original 18-month transition timetable, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
 - E. whereas throughout 2022 consultations in N'Djamena between President Mahamat Déby and representatives of civil society and opposition were held; whereas some of these groups made their participation the transition conditional on the clear guarantee that the military would leave power at the end of the transition; whereas in the absence of this guarantee, and other issues, many parties and armed groups have either left the transitional talks or refused to participate in the national dialogue which took place from 20 August to 8 October 2022;
 - F. whereas a national dialogue was organised to elaborate on the future of the transition process; whereas despite efforts to be inclusive, not all opposition groups participated in this process; whereas the dialogue concluded with recommendations to postpone the transition process and not exclude anyone, in particular the current President, from running in future elections;
 - G. whereas following the national dialogue the transitional military government announced that the planned democratic elections would be delayed by up to two years, with Mr Déby remaining in power; whereas elections are now supposed to take place by October 2024;
 - H. whereas in response to the delay to the transition process, deadly clashes broke out on 20 October between security forces and protesters; whereas these clashes led to at least 50 people killed and more than 300 injured according to official sources; whereas opposition groups speak of a much higher number of casualties;
 - I. whereas following the protests, the authorities announced the temporary suspension of activity of seven political groups;
 - J. whereas following the protests at least 401 people were put on mass trial in Koro Toro prison, a high-security jail located in the desert 600km from the capital N'Djamena; whereas the protestors were publicly labelled as insurrectionists; whereas the Public prosecutor Moussa Wade Djibrine told the media that 262 people were given jail sentences, 80 were given suspended terms and 59 were acquitted;
 - K. whereas there a significant concerns about whether the people charged will have a fair and public trial and access to real legal representation;
 - L. whereas in August 2022 a peace agreement was signed between the government and rebel groups and whereas this was seen as a major step in the countries transitional process; whereas not all rebel groups were signed up to the agreement;

- M. whereas the dire socio-economic conditions, significant insecurity and human rights abuses, have been a cause for international concern for the past decades and next to tackling rising food insecurity, corruption, extreme poverty, as well as recent flooding are at the centre of EU-Chad relations;
- N. whereas Chad is located in a strategic region and is facing severe security challenges given the country's proximity to regional militant strongholds, particularly around the Lake Chad region where Islamic State West Africa Province and Boko Haram, a Nigeria-based Islamist militant group, operate;
- O. whereas Chad plays a key role in regional peacekeeping efforts as part of the G5 Sahel joint force as well as the Lake Chad Multinational Joint Taskforce (MNJTF);
- P. whereas Christians, also as a result of the rising Islamic extremism linked to Boko Haram; face considerable pressure in Chad given that there is a heavy Islamic influence in politics, the economy and society; whereas in their effort to establish a caliphate in the Lake Chad Basin and beyond, Boko Haram has kidnapped thousands of girls, women, boys and men from their homes across north-eastern Nigeria, northern Cameroon and southern areas of Niger and Chad;
- Q. whereas according to the UN Chad is home to over 577.000 refugees, mainly from Darfur and the Central African Republic, as well as 381.000 internally displaced people;
- R. whereas the stability of Chad is crucial for the Sahel and Northern and Eastern Africa;
1. Strongly condemns the violence perpetrated on 20 October in several towns in Chad which has led to the death of at least fifty people; underlines that the repression of demonstrations and the excessive use of force constitute serious attacks on the freedoms of expression and demonstration; strongly regrets that these measures by the government risk undermining the ongoing transition process;
 2. Calls on the government to immediately halt the excessive use of force against demonstrators and respect the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, which is enshrined in national and international texts, including the guidelines of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
 3. Reiterates the importance of a rapid return to constitutional order and of a time-limited transition that guarantees respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;
 4. Recalls that a real engagement with all civil and political actors is essential in order to guarantee the credibility and legitimacy of the ongoing process;
 5. Strongly urges the government to ensure that all those charged after the 20 October protests have full access to legal protection; underlines that the EU will very closely follow the continuation of the legal proceedings and that the outcome will also be a key determinant of future EU-Chad relations;
 6. Urges the government to take immediate action to investigate and bring to justice those responsible for unlawful killings;

7. Encourages member states and other international organisation to raise human rights concerns with the Chadian authorities up to the highest political level;
8. Regrets that so far the transition process failed to deliver a meaningful consensus on national reconciliation, given the absence of several rebel groups and influential opposition parties;
9. Calls on the government to seek the support of national and international mediators, such as groups of Religious and Elders, the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the African Union, the EU Special Representative for the Sahel, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), or other international organisations, in order to overcome the current deadlock and advance the national dialogue and democratic transition process;
10. Expects opposition groups to also condemn any form of violent protest and use all legal remedies provided in the transition charter to ensure transparent elections;
11. Calls on the government to ensure that all citizens can fully exercise their constitutional rights regarding religious freedom; condemns in this context any form of violence or repression against Christians and other religious minorities;
12. Underlines the need to uphold commitments under international law regarding the treatment of refugees; reiterates the EU's support and readiness to engage regarding the treatment of refugees and IDPs;
13. Encourages negotiations by EU Member States on the development of a more ambitious EU migration and asylum policy in order to better manage migration from the Sahel and neighbouring countries;
14. 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 Chad, the Secretariat of the G5 Sahel, the Co-Chairs of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the Pan-African Parliament, the African Union, as well as ECCAS.