JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rules 144(5) and 132(4) of the Rules of Procedure

replacing the following motions:
B9-0104/2022 (The Left)
B9-0106/2022 (Verts/ALE)
B9-0110/2022 (S&D)
B9-0113/2022 (Renew)
B9-0116/2022 (ECR)
B9-0119/2022 (PPE)

on the political crisis in Burkina Faso
(2022/2542(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group
Pedro Marques, Andrea Cozzolino, Maria Arena, Evin Incir
on behalf of the S&D Group
Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Petras Auštreivičius, Malik Azmani, Iñaki Bilbao Barandica, Olivier Chastel, Andreas Glück, Klemen Groselj, Bernard Guetta, Svenja Hahn, Karin Karlsbro, Moritz Körner, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Nathalie Loiseau, Dragoş Pîslaru, Frédérique Ries, Maríà Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Nicolae Ştefănuţă, Ramona Strugariu, Hilde Vautmans
on behalf of the Renew Group
Jordi Solé, Hannah Neumann
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
Anna Fotyga, Karol Karski, Assita Kanko, Ladislav Ilčić, Witold Jan Waszczykowski, Valdemar Tomaševski, Ryszard Antoni Legutko, Raffaele Fitto, Jadwiga Wiśniewska, Eugen Jurzyca, Elżbieta Rafalska, Bogdan Rzońca, Adam Bielan, Ryszard Czarnecki, Veronika Vrecionová
on behalf of the ECR Group
Manu Pineda, Idoia Villanueva Ruiz
on behalf of The Left Group
Fabio Massimo Castaldo
European Parliament resolution on the political crisis in Burkina Faso (2022/2542(RSP))

The European Parliament,

– having regard to its previous resolutions, and in particular those of 19 December 2019 on violations of human rights including religious freedoms in Burkina Faso¹ and of 16 September 2020 on EU-African security cooperation in the Sahel region, West Africa and the Horn of Africa²,

– having regard to the declaration by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on behalf of the EU of 26 January 2022 on the latest developments in Burkina Faso,

– having regard to the statement by the spokesperson for the UN Secretary-General of 24 January 2022 on Burkina Faso,

– having regard to the UN Security Council statement of 9 February 2022 on the situation in Burkina Faso,

– having regard to the final communiqué resulting from the extraordinary summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on the political situation in Burkina Faso of 28 January 2022,

– having regard to the ECOWAS protocol on democracy and good governance,

– having regard to the final communiqué adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1 062nd meeting of 31 January 2022 on the situation in Burkina Faso,

– 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 resolution of 11 March 2021 of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) and the EU on democracy and the respect for constitutions in EU and ACP countries,

– having regard to the joint declaration of the members of the European Council with the member states of the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel) of 28 April 2020,

– 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

having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

– having regard to the Constitution of the Republic of Burkina Faso,

– 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 the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979,

– having regard to Rule 144(5) and 132(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas on 24 January 2022 the military of Burkina Faso, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Paul-Henri Sandaogo Damiba and the self-proclaimed Patriotic Movement for Safeguard and Restoration (MPSR), toppled the elected government headed by President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré; whereas the Burkinabe Constitutional Court later declared Lieutenant-Colonel Damiba the new de facto head of state;

B. whereas shortly before the coup, President Kaboré won a second term in democratic elections held in 2020; whereas he was coerced into announcing his departure as president and resigning; whereas since the coup, he has been detained by the armed forces, with limited contact with outsiders; whereas the People’s Movement for Progress (MPP), the party of President Kaboré, gave assurances on 26 January 2022 that Kaboré was in a presidential villa under house arrest and had a doctor at his disposal;

C. whereas upon taking power, the military junta announced the suspension of the constitution and the dissolution of the government and national assembly; whereas the constitution was reinstated on 31 January 2022; whereas Lieutenant-Colonel Damiba announced in a televised statement that Burkina Faso would uphold its international commitments;

D. whereas the seizure of power by the military was greeted with great circumspection and relative indulgence by civil society in Burkina Faso;

E. whereas the AU, ECOWAS and the Permanent Council of La Francophonie suspended Burkina Faso following the military coup; whereas ECOWAS and the UN sent an interministerial delegation asking for a short transition and President Kaboré’s release; whereas on 3 February 2022 ECOWAS decided not to impose new sanctions on Burkina Faso, but asked the country’s new authorities to present a ‘reasonable timetable for the return to constitutional order’;
F. whereas on 8 February 2022 a technical committee with non-military actors was established to outline the parameters of the transition; whereas the committee has two weeks to propose a draft charter for the transition; whereas the work of the technical committee must revolve around the restoration of territorial integrity, the consolidation of peace through the gradual return of internally displaced persons, good governance and a return to constitutional order;

G. whereas the MPSR claimed the coup was in response to the deteriorating security situation in the country; whereas the Government of Burkina Faso began a process of security sector reform in 2017 with the creation of a national council for defence and security, with the aim of modernising the security sector and fighting corruption therein; whereas discontent and criticism from civilians, the opposition and the military had been growing over President Kaboré’s inability to tackle corruption and effectively implement solutions to the enormous security, social and economic challenges in the country caused by the spread of violent attacks by terrorist groups;

H. whereas the security situation in the Sahel is a direct consequence of the destabilisation of the region and the proliferation of arms following the intervention in Libya in 2011;

I. 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 170 %; whereas this spending failed to improve the living conditions or operational capacity of soldiers, partly owing to rampant financial mismanagement;

J. whereas in the past six years, thousands of people have lost their lives to jihadist and insurgent attacks; whereas, in two years, over 1 000 schools have been closed and many people have fled their homes to escape the violence; 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, a jihadist attack on the gendarmerie garrison in Inata in northern Burkina Faso killed 53 of the 120 soldiers who were waiting for logistical supplies and support, including food rations; 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 and nobody has been prosecuted;

K. whereas the increasing insecurity drove huge numbers of people to the streets in protest in November 2021; whereas the government shut down the internet, increasing the discontent of the population and drawing criticism from human rights organisations and citizen movements in the country;

L. whereas on 22 January 2022, as citizens protested against deteriorating security in the country, violent demonstrations broke out in Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso’s two largest cities; whereas the seizure of power by the military came two days after riot police clashed with anti-government protesters in the capital, Ouagadougou;

M. whereas the escalating violence has resulted in the situation in Burkina Faso becoming
one of the fastest-growing displacement and protection crises in the world, with at least 1.6 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 rose to over 1.5 million last year, which amounts to a 50% increase; whereas the Sahel region is experiencing an unprecedented rural exodus, since people who have been forcibly displaced are moving to urban areas where they encounter new risks; whereas among internally displaced people, threats to women and young people are particularly severe, including sexual and labour exploitation, gender-based violence, forced recruitment and trafficking; whereas Burkinabe women, who have half as many opportunities to access education as men, are the most affected by extreme poverty in the country;

N. whereas the climate emergency is having a visible and deeply damaging effect on the Sahel region, leading to drought, crop failure, displacement, land and resource conflict, food insecurity and poverty; whereas a lack of access to education, employment opportunities and income is driving recruitment to extremist organisations and jihadist movements and thus fuelling regional instability;

O. whereas the recent coup and deteriorating situation in Mali in particular have had an impact on the situation in Burkina Faso; whereas the recent coup is also West Africa’s fourth coup in less than two years; whereas the increasing number of coups reflects a major crisis in West Africa’s political systems;

P. whereas the G5 Sahel, a collaborative defence effort by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, notably supported by the EU and the AU, coordinates action in regional development and security in order to fight terrorism and bring stability to the region, but has been unable to convince local populations of its effectiveness;

Q. whereas a group of Russian military contractors has written to Burkina Faso’s coup leaders offering to train the country’s army in its fight against jihadists;

1. Condemns and expresses its concern about the coup perpetrated by the armed forces against the democratically elected Government of Burkina Faso; stresses that an urgent return to constitutional order is imperative, including an immediate return to civilian government;

2. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of President Kaboré and all other government officials;

3. Welcomes the announcement of the establishment of the technical committee to outline the next steps of the transition process; notes the public declarations of Lieutenant-Colonel Damiba, in which he pledged a return to normal constitutional life as soon as possible and that the country would continue to respect international commitments; 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 and on the technical committee to identify clear timelines and processes in order to conduct inclusive and transparent elections as soon as possible;

5. Underlines that a true and honest national dialogue, involving all sectors of civil society, is needed in order to outline a clear future vision for Burkinabe democracy;

6. 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 internally displaced people and security force operations;

7. Encourages the National Coordination for a Successful Transition (CNRT) to monitor the authorities and demand that they ensure the protection of human rights defenders and civil society organisations in the exercise of their mandate, including denouncing human rights violations, police violence and the 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. Recalls that failure to address impunity for past atrocities by security services and militias hampers peace efforts in Burkina Faso; calls on the authorities of Burkina Faso to protect the rights of suspects arrested in counter-terrorism operations and to ensure that perpetrators of human rights abuses are held accountable; notes that a self-appointed government without a democratic mandate undermines efforts to strengthen the rule of law and accountability;

9. Reiterates that the protection and safety of civilians is one of the key tasks of any government and underlines that additional measures should be taken in Burkina Faso to improve the protection of civilians;

10. 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;

11. Calls for the EU and its Member States to increase financial support and humanitarian aid in order to meet the urgent needs of the people of Burkina Faso, and in particular those of displaced persons and refugees in neighbouring countries;

12. Calls on the authorities of Burkina Faso to revise the immunity clause in the statute of the special forces, a new military unit created in May 2021, which states that members
13. Calls on the EU Member States to live up to their international obligations to apply a thorough check and tracing system in their exports of weapons to non-EU countries, as stipulated in the Arms Trade Treaty, so as to avoid their misuse and the fuelling of human rights violations;

14. Expresses its concern about the overall state of democracy in the region and calls on all actors, both domestic and international, to reflect on the lessons learnt from the different coups and how to better support and encourage democratic processes in the region;

15. Continues to firmly believe that the involvement of the Wagner Group in West Africa runs counter to the objective of bringing peace, security and stability to Burkina Faso and ensuring the protection of its people; calls for the activities of the Wagner Group and other private military companies in Africa to be thoroughly discussed at the upcoming EU-Africa Summit;

16. Underlines that terrorism and instability across the Sahel region are challenging and undermining democratic consolidation and the rule of law; recalls that tackling the underlying causes of extremism and military efforts to restore government control across the region are essential to reinforcing the popular legitimacy of democratically elected governments;

17. 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, in particular through the provision of food, water and medical services; calls on the authorities to support and facilitate the work of humanitarian organisations in Burkina Faso in order to guarantee unhindered humanitarian access and enable them to address the needs of displaced persons;

18. 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 and the Pan-African Parliament, the Economic Community of West African States, and the African Union and its institutions.