Resolution on Rwanda: case of Victoire Ingabire

2013/2641(RSP) - 23/05/2013 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 45 votes to 3 with 3 abstentions a resolution on Rwanda: case of Victoire Ingabire.

The resolution was tabled by the Greens/EFA, ECR, EPP, S&D and GUE/NGL groups.

It expresses its deep concern at the initial trial of Victoire Ingabire, who ran in Rwnanda's presidential elections, and was sentenced to eight years in prison on 30 October 2012. It **strongly condemns the politically motivated nature of that trial**, which did not meet international standards and which relied on **fabricated evidence using torture**. Members call on the Rwandan judiciary to ensure a prompt and fair appeal for Ms Victoire Ingabire that meets the standards set by Rwandan and international law.

Parliament calls on the **EU to send observers** to monitor the Victoire Ingabire appeal trial. It reminds the Rwandan authorities that the EU has raised its concerns with regard to the respect due to human rights and the right to a fair trial in the context of the **official political dialogue** with Rwanda under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement. It also calls on the EU, in collaboration with other international donors, to **exert continued pressure to encourage human rights reform in Rwanda in the context of international development,** noting that much greater priority should be given to human rights and the rule of law.

Parliament goes on to express its concern that 19 years after the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) came to power, and two years after the re-election of President Kagame, Rwanda **still does not have any functioning opposition political parties.**

Members stress that this trial is important, both politically and legally, as a test of the Rwandan judiciary's capacity to deal with high-profile political cases in an independent manner. They call on the Rwandan authorities to:

- release all individuals detained solely for exercising their rights of freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly;
- investigate allegations of torture and other abuses of human rights effectively and to bring those guilty of such offences to justice, as impunity cannot be tolerated;
- ensure the separation of administrative, legislative and judicial powers, and in particular the independence of the judiciary, and to promote the participation of opposition parties, in a context of mutual respect and inclusive dialogue as part of a democratic process;
- improve their human rights record.

Lastly, Members take the view that the 2008 genocide-ideology law used to accuse Victoire Ingabire has served as a **political instrument to silence criticism** of the government, and it calls on Rwanda to review it.