Resolution on the situation in Burundi

2017/2508(RSP) - 19/01/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in Burundi.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, Greens/EFA and EFDD groups.

Burundi has been undergoing a dramatic political, social and economic crisis since its president, Pierre Nkurunziza, decided, in violation of the Arusha Agreement and the country's constitution, to run for a third presidential term in April 2015.

In November 2016, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) reported more than 1 000 deaths, 8 000 people detained for political reasons, 300 to 800 missing persons, hundreds of cases of torture, hundreds of women made victims to sexual violence, thousands of arbitrary arrests, more than 310 000 people made refugees in neighbouring countries and 61 000 internally displaced persons.

Concerned at the worsening political and security situation in Burundi, Members **condemned the violence occurring in Burundi since 2015**, which has led to death, torture, targeted violence against women, including collective rape, harassment and imprisonment of thousands of people, the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of Burundians, arbitrary arrests and illegal detentions, and violations of freedom of the press and of expression. They called for a thorough **independent inquiry** into the killings and abuses, and for the perpetrators of these acts to be brought to justice.

Parliament is deeply worried about the adoption by the National Assembly in Burundi on 23 and 28 December 2016 of two draft laws that establish **tighter controls on the actions of domestic and international NGOs**. Those laws led to Ligue Iteka, human rights organisation, being banned from operating in the country.

The resolution urged the Burundian authorities to reconsider this decision. It reminded the authorities of Burundi of their obligations to guarantee, protect and promote fundamental rights, including the civil and political rights of its citizens such as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly, as provided for in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

Concerned that Burundi has formalised its withdrawal from the Rome Statute, Parliament recalled that the International Criminal Court (ICC) is a key institution. It called on the UN Security Council and the ICC to **quickly open a full investigation into alleged human rights violations in Burundi**, including the danger of genocide within its jurisdiction, committed during the recent crisis in the country.

Members expressed their support for the decision by the Council to **suspended direct financial support** to the Burundian administration, including budgetary support, while maintaining full financial support for the population and humanitarian aid through direct channels.

They welcomed the **targeted sanctions** adopted by the EU, including travel restrictions and asset freezes against Burundians responsible for human rights violations.

Lastly, deeply concerned about the growing flow of **refugees** to neighbouring countries and the alarming humanitarian situation in Burundi, Parliament reiterated its support to all humanitarian organisations operating on the ground, as well as the neighbouring host countries.

The resolution urged all parties to establish the necessary conditions for rebuilding trust and fostering national unity through an **inclusive and transparent national dialogue**, including the government, opposition parties and civil society representatives in accordance with the Arusha Agreement and the Burundian Constitution.