Resolution on the rule of law crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Gabon

2017/2510(RSP) - 02/02/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the rule of law crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and in Gabon.

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

Members stated that they are deeply concerned at the increasingly unstable situation in both countries and urged the authorities to abide by their international obligations and guarantee human rights.

As regards Gabon, Members deplored the fact that the appeal procedure which led to Ali Bongo being declared the winner in the election was conducted in an opaque manner, and that the Constitutional Court failed to take proper account of the irregularities noted in some provinces.

Parliament strongly condemned the intimidation and threats against members of the European Union electoral observation mission (EU EOM) and the attacks challenging its neutrality and transparency. They urged the Government of Gabon to conduct a thorough and expeditious reform of the electoral framework, taking account of the recommendations made by the EU EOM.

Moreover, they called for the EU, in collaboration with the UN and the African Union, to continue to monitor closely the overall situation in Gabon and to report all cases of violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Council was urged to initiate a consultation process under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement as soon as there is a lack of progress in the intensified political dialogue. If no agreement can be reached within the consultation process, Parliament shall invite the Council to consider imposing targeted sanctions on those responsible for the post-electoral violence and human rights abuses, and for undermining the democratic process in the country.

As regards the DRC, Parliament reiterated its call for necessary steps to be taken to **create an environment conducive to free, fair and credible elections** to be held no later than December 2017. It urged the Congolese Government to immediately address open questions related to the sequencing of the electoral calendar, its budget and called for the European Union and its Member States to support the implementation of the agreement and the holding of the electoral process.

Lastly, Parliament called on the Congolese and Gabonese authorities to ratify the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance at the earliest opportunity and recalled that the situation in Gabon and the DRC poses a serious threat to the stability of the Central African region as a whole.