Resolution on Gabon: repression of the opposition

2017/2830(RSP) - 14/09/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Gabon: repression of the opposition

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

It noted that Gabon has witnessed an **increase in political violence**, particularly in particular the post-electoral violence since August 2016, during which arrests, killings and enforced disappearances took place.

Members strongly condemned the pressure and intimidation being exerted on the opposition in Gabon, deeming it unacceptable that several leaders of the Gabon opposition, including the candidate in the 2016 presidential election, Jean Ping, were denied the right to leave the country. Further, they noted that the government has forbidden political opponents who contest the victory of Ali Bongo to speak in public and private media, and stressed the fundamental role the opposition plays in a democratic society.

Under the circumstances, Parliament called for an **international inquiry**, led by the UN, into the elections and the abuses that have been committed since. At the same time, it called on the VP/HR, the Commission and the Member States to review their policies towards Gabon and to consider **targeted sanctions** for individuals responsible for the electoral fraud and the subsequent violence.

Parliament referred to its previous resolution on the crisis regarding the rule of law in Gabon and 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. It also reminded Gabon of its duties and responsibilities as a **State Party under the Cotonou Agreement,** including the obligation to provide clear and tangible information on the reforms undertaken since the ratification, and on the post-electoral violence. It urged all parties involved in the Intensified Political Dialogue to work towards a tangible success of this process.

Lastly, Members welcomed the investigation conducted in France on the ill-gotten gains from Gabon and called for the utmost transparency regarding the EUR 1.3 million payment made into a French bank account linked to the Bongo family.