Resolution on Burundi

2018/2785(RSP) - 05/07/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Burundi.

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

Parliament expressed its deep concern about **endemic impunity and human rights violations**, and denounced once again the intimidation, repression, violence and harassment of journalists, opposition supporters and human rights defenders in Burundi. It reminded Burundi of its obligation, as a member of the UN Human Rights Council, to resume and fully cooperate with the UN Commission of Inquiry on Burundi (UNCI). Members remained deeply concerned that the **new constitution adopted by referendum on 17 May 2018** could start to **dismantle** the carefully negotiated provisions defined in the **Arusha Agreement** of 2000 that helped to put an end to Burundi's civil war. It recalled that the **constitutional changes** voted for during the referendum include the expansion of Presidential powers, the reduction of the powers of the Vice-President, the appointment of the prime minister by the President, the introduction of a simple majority procedure to pass or change legislation in parliament, the ability to review the quotas implemented by the Arusha Agreement, and the prohibition from participating in government of political parties with less than 5 % of the votes, all of which endanger the Arusha Agreement. Parliament called on the Government of Burundi to **fully respect the Arusha Agreement** and its international legal obligations regarding human and civil rights. It urged Burundian authorities to guarantee the respect of the rule of law and human rights, such as the right of freedom of expression and freedom of the media, which are pre-conditions for holding inclusive, credible and transparent **elections in 2020.**

Members supported the EU's decision, following the consultation with the Burundian authorities under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement, to **suspend direct financial support to the Government of Burundi**, and welcomed the EU's adoption of **travel restrictions and asset freeze measures** against those seeking to undermine peace efforts or human rights. They demanded an **end to any further payment to the Burundian troops** and various contingents from Burundi engaged in UN and AU peacekeeping missions. They noted that President Nkurunziza announced that he will not run for another term in 2020 but called on the international community to closely follow the situation in Burundi, irrespective of President Nkurunziza's statement about the 2020 elections.

Parliament went on to state its concern about the **humanitarian situation**, which is marked by 169 000 internally displaced persons, 1.67 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, and more than 410 000 Burundians seeking refuge in neighbouring countries. It commended the host countries for their efforts and called on governments in the region to ensure that the **return of refugees is voluntary**, and carried out in safety and dignity. It also welcomed the assistance provided by bilateral and multilateral partners in alleviating the humanitarian situation, and encouraged the Commission to provide **additional direct support** to the population in 2018.

Lastly, Parliament called for a **renewed and coordinated approach** between the AU, the EU, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the UN as a whole, so that all parties may continue their dialogue with a view to the Government of Burundi creating conditions conducive to the resumption of assistance.