

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002697/25
to the Commission
Thierry Mariani (PFE)
(2 July 2025)**

Subject: Rwanda: opposition leader arrested

On 21 June 2025, Victoire Ingabire, a Rwandan opposition politician and former political prisoner, was arrested in Kigali while trying to peacefully participate in a public meeting held by her party, DALFA-Umurinzi. According to Human Rights Watch, this arrest is just one example of the many acts of harassment, acts of intimidation and restrictions targeting critics in Rwanda.

The July 2024 presidential election was held in a climate of political repression and without any genuine competition, with Paul Kagame being re-elected with 99.18% of the vote. The EU failed to express any criticism when confronted with a result reminiscent of the Soviet era. Against that backdrop, this new arrest illustrates the Kagame regime's shift towards authoritarianism.

Given the close partnership between the European Union and Rwanda, particularly in development cooperation, and the commitments made by Rwanda in the framework of the Cotonou Agreement and the Samoa Agreement:

1. What steps has the Commission taken — or what steps does it intend to take — to call for the immediate release of Victoire Ingabire?
2. What measures does the Commission plan to put in place to ensure that Rwanda fulfils its international commitments on human rights, political freedoms and democratic pluralism?
3. Does the Commission plan to make some EU aid contingent on tangible progress in upholding political and civic rights?

Submitted: 2.7.2025

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(20 October 2025)**

The Commission has been closely monitoring developments in the renewed judicial persecution of Mrs Ingabire. In coordination with the Member States, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EU Delegation in Kigali have raised the case with the Rwandan authorities repeatedly and in various settings.

The EU Ambassador in Kigali has engaged with the Minister of Justice and the Chair of Rwanda's Human Rights Commission. The EU Delegation and the Kingdom of the Netherlands have also been present at the court hearings.

The Commission has repeatedly called for due process and the full respect of the rule of law in Rwanda, including the right to a fair trial, access to legal counsel, and adequate detention conditions in line with international standards.

The EEAS and the EU Delegation in Kigali, in coordination with Member States, will continue to follow Mrs Ingabire's legal case with great attention.

The EU incorporates a human rights-based approach throughout all cooperation with Rwanda, ensuring that respect for human rights is central to design, implementation, and evaluation of all interventions.

This ensures that EU interventions consistently support human rights principles such as universality, inclusion, participation, non-discrimination, accountability and transparency.

In addition to this integrated approach, the EU allocates specific funding under the Human Rights and Democracy Programme⁽¹⁾, which supports a number of projects in Rwanda, including ones aimed at advancing freedom of expression, access to information and non-discrimination.

The EU maintains continuous oversight of all projects and the broader situation in Rwanda through regular monitoring and reporting.

⁽¹⁾ Multiannual Indicative Programme 2021-2027 for Human Rights and Democracy: https://international-partnerships.ec.europa.eu/policies/peace-and-governance/human-rights_en#human-rights-and-democracy-thematic-programme.