

Resolution on the ESDP operation in Chad and the Central African Republic

2007/2627(RSP) - 27/09/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 26th September 2007, the European Parliament adopted a joint resolution by 453 votes in favour, 104 against and 15 abstentions, and called on the Council, the Commission and the United Nations to coordinate their efforts in order to create conditions that would enable the different parties to the conflict in the broader region of Darfur, eastern Chad and northern CAR to find a political solution which would end the insecurity and resulting humanitarian disaster in the area, facilitating the return of the refugees and IDPs to their places of origin. It recalled that no peacekeeping mission in eastern Chad and northern CAR could be successful without a genuine political reconciliation process.

Parliament endorsed the launch of an ESDP operation in eastern Chad and northern CAR, to last for one year, but made its final approval conditional on the fulfilment of the following:

- the mission of the European force (EUFOR) must create the conditions necessary for a secure environment for the work of the UN police force, the return of IDPs, the supply of humanitarian aid, the free movement of humanitarian personnel and the continuation of the dialogue between the political forces in the region;
- it was extremely important that EUFOR was seen to be impartial; the composition of EUFOR should therefore be diverse and Member States should contribute the necessary troops as soon as possible;
- at the same time, and in order to avoid becoming a target, EUFOR must remain neutral with regard to the complex political situation in the region by avoiding becoming involved in fights between governmental authorities and rebel groups;
- in full compliance with the principles of international humanitarian law, EUFOR should not become involved or interfere with the tasks performed by the NGOs present in Chad and CAR, in order not to endanger them;
- EUFOR must establish effective coordination with UNAMID in order to secure the area under its responsibility in the most efficient way;
- EUFOR must work as a deterrent force, which means that it must have a robust mandate under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter and clear rules of engagement allowing the use of force when necessary, in particular to prevent attacks on civilians, camps and villages, humanitarian workers or UN police officers, as well as in self defence;
- in order to deter any potential aggressor, EUFOR must have the necessary number of troops and must be equipped appropriately; it must be able to secure its supply lines and conduct long-range patrols with armoured vehicles, helicopters (including transport and attack helicopters) and reconnaissance planes;
- EUFOR must be considered as a bridging force with a temporary mandate; a clear exit strategy must therefore be defined before the deployment begins, which should foresee the replacement of EUFOR by a successor operation (an AU, a UN or a hybrid force) in order to provide for the successful conclusion of its mandate and the timely return of the troops committed.

Parliament regretted that this ESDP operation could not be conducted, for many reasons, from the newly established operations centre of the EU in Brussels.

Lastly, it underlined that its final approval of the ESDP operation would be subject to its being kept fully informed of the different phases in the preparation of the operation as regards, inter alia, the crisis

management concept, joint action, the concept of operations, the operation plan, and the force generation process.