

Resolution on North Kivu

2008/2535(RSP) - 21/02/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

Following the debate which took place on 21 February, Parliament adopted by 59 votes, a joint resolution on the situation in on North Kivu in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Recalling that the conflict affecting the DRC has claimed the lives of 5 400 000 people since 1998 and continues to be the direct or indirect cause of 1500 deaths each day, Parliament expresses its deep outrage at the massacres and crimes against humanity which have been continuing for too many years in North Kivu and calls on all relevant national and international authorities systematically to bring the perpetrators to justice, whoever they may be. The UN Security Council is asked as a matter of urgency to take all measures capable of genuinely preventing any further attacks on the civilian populations of North Kivu.

Members note that, despite its broad mandate, MONUC has not had sufficient resources to enable it to prevent these massacres, rapes, pillaging, forced recruitment of civilians and child soldiers, and countless other acts of violence and human rights abuses. They call on the Council and the Commission to ensure that the recent strengthening of MONUC leads to a significant improvement in the security of the populations of North Kivu and, should this not ensue, to urge the United Nations Security Council to give MONUC the means to fulfil its mission, beginning with the effective and lasting protection of the civilian populations of the region.

Parliament calls for zero tolerance of the sexual violence against girls and women which is used as a weapon of war and demands severe criminal penalties against the perpetrators of these crimes. It recalls the importance of access to reproductive health services in conflict situations and refugee camps. It welcomes the holding of the peace conference in Goma, given the need to find a political solution to the conflict affecting the East of the DRC. The resolution underlines, however, besides the notable absence of representatives of Interhamwes (FDLR), the fragility of the demobilisation undertakings and ceasefire commitment agreed on 23 January 2008 at the end of the Conference. All parties to this conflict are urged to put an end to violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law, and allow humanitarian agencies to come to the aid of the civilian population.

Parliament points out that the practical details of this demobilisation have yet to be worked out within the framework of the Joint Technical Peace and Security Commission under the co-presidency of the DRC Government and the international facilitation of that commitment. It therefore calls for that Commission to be set up as swiftly as possible so as to finalise demobilisation issues.

It welcomes the meeting held in September 2007 between the Congolese and Rwandan Foreign Ministers and calls on the Rwandan authorities to play a tangible role in the various efforts to resolve the conflict in North Kivu, particularly as regards prosecutions, disarmament, demobilisation and the repatriation of Interhamwes present in North Kivu.

For their part, the Council and the Commission are called upon to release emergency funds, in view of the extreme gravity of the humanitarian situation, not only because of the conflicts which continue to affect that region, but also as a result of the earthquake of 3 February 2008, measuring 6 on the Richter scale, and to ensure that humanitarian workers are able to operate under the best possible conditions.

Parliament goes on to call on the Council and the Commission to implement large-scale medical assistance programmes for the civilian populations in Eastern DRC, in order to both to meet the immediate needs of the population and in anticipation of the reconstruction of the region which will be

required. It asks for the effective establishment of monitoring mechanisms, such as the Kimberley process for the certification of the origin of natural resources imported into the EU market. The Council and every Member State must also provide special aid to the populations of Eastern DRC.

Lastly, Parliament calls on the European Union mission to North Kivu scheduled for March 2008 to report back to it.