Resolution on the situation in Chad

2008/2568(RSP) - 24/04/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

Following the debate which took place on the same date, the European Parliament adopted a resolution tabled on behalf of the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, UEN, Greens/ALE, GUE/NGL groups on Chad, assuring the Chadian people, and in particular the victims of the ongoing conflict, of its solidarity. The resolution highlights the scale of the problems facing the country, with internal political unrest as well as a huge influx of refugees from neighbouring countries. There are more than 250,000 Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad, over 57,000 refugees from the Central African Republic and 180,000 internally displaced persons. The government faces rebel groups (one of which briefly penetrated the capital, N'Djamena, in February) but has itself been accused of widespread human rights abuses.

Parliament voices its utmost concern for the fate of Ibni Oumar Mahamat Saleh, of whom there has been no news since his arrest on 3 February 2008. Parliament states that it holds the Chadian authorities personally responsible for his state of health and calls on them to take the necessary measures so that he regains his freedom without delay.

Members condemn the persecution and arbitrary arrest of opposition politicians and journalists. They call on the Chadian Government to clarify the situation of any opposition politicians or journalists still being detained, to deal with their cases in accordance with the principles underpinning the rule of law, to cease any arbitrary arrests and to put an end to impunity and bring to justice those responsible for human rights violations.

Parliament stresses the need for politics in Chad to become more ethnically and geographically representative, underlining the fact that the Darfur crisis is not responsible for all of Chad's woes, as the humanitarian situation has only emerged in the last six years. Chad has had its own internal domestic problems for well over four decades, and Parliament denounces any attempt by the Chadian Government to use Sudan and Darfur as a smokescreen for hiding political dissent within Chad. It points out that no lasting solution can be found without a genuine process of national reconciliation and of global dialogue, involving all players, with a view to a comprehensive peace based on the rule of law and true democracy. It takes note of the intention expressed by the new Prime Minister to implement the 13 August 2007 agreement signed between the Chadian Presidency and the unarmed opposition in N'Djamena, with a view to the reinforcement of the democratic process in Chad by all relevant Chadian political parties in the majority and in the opposition and to preparations for legislative elections scheduled for 2009.

Parliament reaffirms that a comprehensive inter-Chadian dialogue must be convened as soon as possible, stressing the importance of bringing the rebel groups into the political process. It encourages all parties, including the Chadian Government and the EU, to find ways to negotiate with the armed opposition as soon as it agrees to a full and unconditional ceasefire. Members reaffirm their fundamental opposition to any attempt at taking power by force of arms; strongly condemns the continuing armed activities of rebel groups in Chad.

The resolution acknowledges the usefulness of the ESDP EUFOR TCHAD/RCA mission for guaranteeing the safety of camps for refugees and displaced persons. It regrets, however, that, in terms of troop composition, EUFOR does not sufficiently reflect the diversity of the EU, and calls on the Member States which have not yet done so to contribute to providing the necessary troops and equipment so as to guarantee its European identity. Parliament expresses its disappointment that EUFOR troops have not yet been deployed to the Guereda area, and is concerned that this area has been left somewhat exposed.

It reiterates its deep concern at the increasingly serious humanitarian and security situation in Chad and calls on the international community to scale up its aid to meet the 2008 Humanitarian Appeal for Chad. Donor contributions are urgently required to ensure that purchases are completed in the coming months so that food reaches eastern Chad on time, and such funding is required at least a year in advance in order to meet such pressing needs. Furthermore, Parliament is deeply concerned by the negative impact of this humanitarian crisis on regional stability, and suggests that an international regional conference should be convened to address the complexities of the relationship between Chad and its neighbours. It calls, in this context, on the governments of Chad and Sudan to respect and uphold their non-aggression agreement of 13 March 2008.

Lastly, Parliament calls on the governments of Chad and Sudan to cease immediately all support to armed groups in Darfur and Eastern Chad, and to settle differences through political dialogue and to take all necessary measures to stabilise the current situation.