Resolution on the situation in Lebanon

2008/2539(RSP) - 22/05/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 9 April 2008, the European Parliament adopted, by 520 votes to 6 with 13 abstentions, a resolution on the situation in Lebanon. The resolution had been tabled for consideration in plenary by the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, UEN, Greens/EFA and GUE /NGL groups. Parliament points out that the current political deadlock in Lebanon is paralysing the proper functioning of the country. This political crisis poses a considerable threat to the fragile stability in Lebanon and in the region as a whole. A stable, fully sovereign, united and democratic Lebanon is of crucial importance for the stability and peaceful development of the entire Middle East.

Parliament welcomes the Agreement of 15 May 2008 reached in Doha on the election of General Michel Sleiman as President of the Republic in the coming days, the creation of a new National Unity Government and the adoption of the election law. Parliament stresses the importance of the positive reaction given by the international community; congratulates the Lebanese parties on the Agreement, and the State of Qatar and the League of Arab States on the successful mediation. It points out that political stability in Lebanon should be built on the restoration of a climate of confidence between all the parties, the renunciation of violence and the rejection of external influence.

Parliament welcomes the positive way in which the army and security services contributed to putting an end to the recent developments, and invites all the parties involved to support the Lebanese army so that it can guarantee fully the functioning, security, law and order, sovereignty and stability of Lebanon. The security of the country and of all Lebanese people is dependent on the disarmament of all armed groups, especially Hezbollah, and control of the trafficking of arms to Lebanon. Parliament considers it vital that all weapons imported into Lebanon be directed only to the official Lebanese army, and it reiterates its call for the Lebanese Government to exercise, in cooperation with United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), full sovereignty and effective control over the territory of the country in this connection. All parties must renounce violence, fully accept the rules of democracy and recognise all state authorities and institutions democratically elected, regardless of their ethnic, religious and party affiliation and origin.

Members reiterate their call for all the parties concerned to support the work of the international tribunal set up by UN Security Council Resolution 1757 (2007) to try those responsible for the assassination of the former Prime Minister, Rafik Hariri, and other politically motivated assassinations in Lebanon, and urge Syria to cooperate fully with the tribunal.

Recalling that more than 300 000 Palestinian refugees are still living in poor conditions in Lebanon, and that the outbreaks of violence and the fights with the army that have taken place in some Palestinian refugee camps have made the situation in the country more strained, Parliament urges the Lebanese authorities to make every effort to put an end to all discrimination against the Palestinian refugees. The international community must increase its assistance so as to arrive at a lasting settlement.

Parliament calls on Syria to refrain from all interference that can have a negative impact on Lebanese internal affairs and to play a constructive role in seeking to establish stability in the country. It appeals to Iran and Syria to play a constructive role, and calls on all parties concerned to comply with UN Security Council Resolutions 1559 (2004) and 1701 (2006), with regard to respecting the independence, sovereignty, security and stability of Lebanon, recalling the ban on selling weapons to armed militias.

Reiterating its support for the determination of the European Union to assist Lebanon in its economic restructuring, Parliament calls on the Council and the Commission to continue their efforts to support the reconstruction and economic recovery of Lebanon and to establish closer cooperation with civil society in the country, in order to promote further democratisation there.