Resolution on the routine killing of civilians in Somalia

2008/2603(RSP) - 19/06/2008 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

Following the debate which took place during the sitting of 19 June 2008, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the routine killing of civilians in Somalia. The resolution had been tabled for consideration in plenary by the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, UEN, and Greens/EFA groups. Parliament strongly condemns the continued fighting, targeted killings and other serious violations of human rights committed by all parties to the conflict, which has caused the loss of life of numerous Somali civilians and a humanitarian catastrophe. It recalls that since February 2007, some 856 970 Somalis have fled fighting in Mogadishu, and 2.6 million Somalis - about 35% of the population - are in need of humanitarian assistance, a figure which could rise to 3.5 million by the end of the year.

Members call on all sides to the conflict immediately to halt all violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, stop attacks targeting civilians, cease all use of death threats, rape, unlawful arrest, kidnapping, intimidation and looting of civilians, and fully abide by the provisions of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions. They call also for the liberation of the two Italian members and one Somali member of the agricultural NGO Cooperazione Italiana Nord Sud , Jolanda Occhipinti, Giuliano Paganini and Abdirahaman Yussuf Harale, kidnapped on 21 May 2008 around 60 km south of Mogadishu, for whom a ransom of USD 1 000 000 has been demanded. There must be investigations into all cases of human rights violations, including grave violations of children's rights. Parliament urges the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) to end the detention of children and to control the proliferation of small arms. All sides to the conflict must take all the necessary steps to ensure unimpeded humanitarian access and assistance to affected populations in the country, and to take effective measures to ensure the safety of local and international humanitarian workers. Members note that 15 aid workers have been killed since early 2008.

Parliament welcomes the peace deal reached between the TFG and ARS at the inter-Somali talks in Djibouti on 9 June 2008. It urges the TFG to engage in a genuine reconciliation process with all parties to the conflict within the country to create the conditions for peace, security and stability. The TFG is asked, in collaboration with the UN and the AU, to use all available means to prevent piracy and armed robbery committed from the Somali coast against vessels, especially those carrying humanitarian aid.

Parliament calls on the EU to urge the Kenyan Government to allow Somali refugees asylum and uphold their rights to assistance, and calls on the Kenyan Government to allow unimpeded humanitarian access through the El Wak crossing. All donors and the EU in particular, are asked to increase the provision of humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons and to guarantee effective development aid to the Somali population. The Commission is called upon to ensure that EU aid is not being misappropriated to re-empower warlords who have been absorbed into transnational federal institutions, and to take steps to rectify this if necessary.

Members go on to ask the UN Security Council to strengthen the UN arms embargo on Somalia and take more determined action to ensure that the embargo is fully respected by states in the region. The UN Security Council should impose targeted sanctions, including possible referral to the International Criminal Court, on all individuals accused of committing war crimes and crimes against humanity in Somalia. Parliament welcomes UN Security Council Resolution 1814 (2008), adopted unanimously on 15 May 2008, calling for the possible deployment of a 28 500-strong UN peacekeeping force, pending an improvement in political and security conditions on the ground. It notes that the proposed UN force would replace a small contingent of AU peacekeepers deployed in Somalia since March 2007. It strongly urges

that the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) and any subsequent UN peacekeeping mission be mandated to protect civilians, including women, children and internally displaced persons, and include a strong human rights component.

Lastly, Parliament reiterates its support for the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Somalia, Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, in his efforts to coordinate the action of the international community and to facilitate inter-Somali political dialogue, as well as in stabilising the situation in Somalia through the deployment of AMISOM.