Resolution on Sri Lanka

2009/2735(RSP) - 22/10/2009 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 60 votes to 0 with 3 abstentions, a resolution on Sri Lanka.

The resolution had been tabled by the EPP, ECR, ALDE, S&D, GUE/NGL, Greens/ALE groups.

It deeply deplores the fact that more than 250 000 people are still detained in camps for screening and resettlement, where there are serious concerns about overcrowding and inadequate access to clean water, sanitation and medical facilities. Members call on the Sri Lankan Government to take all necessary steps to organise the quick return home of those detained, as well as the urgent delivery of humanitarian assistance to them, in line with its obligation to protect all people under its jurisdiction. They emphasise the need to give the ICRC and the UN specialised agencies a key role in this process. Noting that the Sri Lankan Government denies humanitarian and human rights organisations adequate access to the camps, Parliament calls on the Sri Lankan authorities to grant humanitarian organisations free access to the camps in order to provide those detained with the necessary humanitarian assistance, particularly with the imminent arrival of monsoon rains in the north of the country.

With regard to the LTTE, the resolution states that the Sri Lankan Government needs to be generous and proactive in addressing the concerns and interests of its Tamil citizens and to implement rapidly the 13th Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution, as well as significant devolution measures so that the Tamil peoples, too, see the defeat of the LTTE as a liberation. It calls on all Tamil leaders to commit to a political settlement and to renounce terrorism and violence once and for al.; Parliament also insists that the Sri Lankan Government is under an obligation to apply international human right standards in judicial proceedings against members of the LTTE.

It calls on the Sri Lankan Government:

- to expedite plans for reconciliation and regional devolution as included in the country's constitution;
- to stop the repression of the media under anti-terrorist legislation and to allow freedom of the press;
- now that the conflict has ended, to review its anti-terrorist legislation and to ensure that all alleged violations of media freedom are the subject of full, open and transparent investigations;
- to give further and increased attention to the clearance of landmines, the presence of which presents a serious obstacle to rehabilitation and economic regeneration. Parliament wants the Sri Lankan Government to take the very positive step of acceding to the Ottawa Treaty (Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction), and urges the Commission, in particular, to sponsor additional support for urgent mine-clearance work in Sri Lanka.

Lastly, Parliament notes that Sri Lanka's economic recovery will depend greatly on foreign direct investment and also on continued EU support. It urges society worldwide to continue providing humanitarian patronage, in order to contribute to a lasting peace, and calls on international donors to link funding for the camps to compliance with commitments on resettlement and to implement a time-limited programme of assistance to the camps.