# Resolution on the situation in Burma/Myanmar

2010/2702(RSP) - 20/05/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Burma and reaffirmed its unwavering commitment to the people of Burma/Myanmar.

The resolution was tabled on behalf of the EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/ALE, ECR, GUE/NGL and EFD groups.

It refers to the announcement of national elections by the Burmese authorities and condemns the holding of elections under completely undemocratic conditions and on the basis of rules which exclude the main democratic opposition party and deprive hundreds of thousands of Burmese citizens of their right to vote and stand for election, in a clear attempt to exclude the country's entire opposition from the ballot. Parliament notes the rules exclude the country's 2200 known political prisoners, and that members of religious orders in Burma/Myanmar, including an estimated 400 000 Buddhist monks, are explicitly banned from voting. These laws are based on the 2010 Constitution, which guarantees impunity for the crimes committed by the current regime and provides for the complete suspension of fundamental rights during the state of emergency, for an indefinite period.

Parliament deplores the fact that, under the new constitution, the military will be guaranteed at least 25% of the seats in parliament and will have the power to suspend civil liberties and legislative authority whenever it deems that to be necessary in the interests of national security. It strongly urges the Government of Burma/Myanmar to take the steps needed to ensure a free, fair and transparent electoral process, including the participation of all voters, all political parties and all other relevant stakeholders in the electoral process, and agree to the presence of international observers.

Parliament recalls that the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Burma/Myanmar has condemned "gross and systematic" human rights abuses committed by Burma/Myanmar's dictatorship, stating that they constitute a state policy that involves authorities in the executive, military and judiciary at all levels, and has called for the establishment of a United Nations commission of inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the dictatorship.

It calls on the High Representative, Member States, and the Commission, as appropriate, to:

- publicly support the recommendation of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Burma/Myanmar that the United Nations establish a commission of inquiry into war crimes and crimes against humanity in Burma/Myanmar, and to include this request in the draft resolution to be discussed at the United Nations General Assembly in 2010;
- reverse cuts in funding for refugees on the Thailand-Burma border and immediately start funding cross-border aid, especially medical assistance. Members recall that ECHO has reduced funding for refugees on the Thailand-Burma border, despite the number of refugees remaining almost the same, and has ended funding for boarding schools in refugee camps.

Parliament welcomes the Council's decision to extend the restrictive measures provided for in the current EU decision by another year and emphasises its readiness to revise, amend or strengthen the measures already adopted in the light of developments on the ground. It also welcomes the EU's support for a global arms embargo and urges European governments and the Commission actively to start working to build a global consensus in favour of such a ban.

The resolution recalls that the Government of Burma/Myanmar continues to refuse the EU Special Envoy on Burma permission to visit the country and engage in dialogue, despite repeated requests over many months. It expresses its strong support for the continued work of the EU Special Envoy and invites the Burma/Myanmar authorities to cooperate fully with him.

Members calls on the Government of Burma/Myanmar to:

- repeal the electoral laws published in March 2010, which make the holding of free and transparent elections impossible;
- heed the appeals of the international community to allow Aung San Suu Kyi and all other prisoners of conscience to participate in the political process;
- lift restrictions on freedom of assembly, association, movement and expression, including for free and independent media, in part by making Internet and mobile telephone services openly available and accessible and ending the use of censorship;
- release all prisoners of conscience without delay, unconditionally and with full restoration of their political rights and to refrain from further politically motivated arrests;
- open a genuine dialogue with all parties and ethnic groups;

Parliament goes on to instruct its delegations for relations with ASEAN, China, Russia, the USA, India, the countries of South Asia and Japan to place Burma/Myanmar on the agenda for their meetings with their counterparts and discussion partners in those countries.

It reiterates its call for a solution to the problem of the Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh, and urges the Bangladesh Government to authorise their official registration as refugees and the Burma/Myanmar authorities to halt all forms of persecution of the Rohingya and fully to respect their fundamental rights as a religious and ethnic minority.

Lastly Parliament urges the governments of China, India and Russia to use their considerable economic and political leverage with the Burmese authorities in order to bring about substantial improvements in Burma/Myanmar and to stop supplying the country with weaponry and other strategic resources. It calls on the governments of the ASEAN countries and of China, which have a 'privileged relationship' with Burma/Myanmar, to use their good offices in particular to try to reverse Burma's policy of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya, which is resulting in hundreds of thousands fleeing over the border into Bangladesh and increasing the hardship of the ultra-poor living in the Cox's Bazaar district.