Resolution on forced evictions in Zimbabwe

2010/2930(RSP) - 21/10/2010 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on forced evictions in Zimbabwe.

The resolution had been tabled by the S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA, EPP and ECR groups.

Up to 20 000 people living in an informal settlement known as Hatcliffe Extension, on the outskirts of Harare, have been threatened with forced eviction for failing to pay prohibitively high lease renewal fees charged by the authorities.

Parliament demands an immediate end to the threat of mass forced evictions in Zimbabwe, and insists that relief and humanitarian agencies be granted unrestricted access in order to assist those under threat and other internally displaced people.

Members insist that the Government of Zimbabwe review and modify Operation Garikai, in genuine consultation with survivors, so as to address the housing needs of all survivors of Operation Murambatsvina (the 2005 mass forced eviction programme).

They call on the Government of Zimbabwe to scrap immediately the arbitrarily imposed lease renewal fees, which residents simply have no means of paying, as well as to develop a housing policy that meets residents' needs, in consultation with all the victims of forced expulsions.

Parliament reminds the Zimbabwean Government of its duty, under international conventions, to provide adequate housing for all those low-income people forcibly evicted from their homes, and to guarantee the rights to life, security and food, as well as providing protection for its citizens from the cycle of insecurity and from further violations by offering security of tenure and affordable payment plans for leases, inter alia, by using mining-sector revenue to meet the needs of its people.

It also deeply regrets that Zimbabwe's attempts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, which are already severely off track, will only be further jeopardised by such mass evictions.

Members also recall that the fight against HIV/AIDS and maternal mortality is being undermined by the government's abusive practices, including its eviction programme, which has disrupted access to basic health care and education.

Lastly, Parliament calls on South Africa and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) to take further measures to encourage a return to full democracy and respect for the rule of law and the human rights of the people of Zimbabwe. It recognises that Robert Mugabe and his close supporters continue to be a stumbling block in the process of political and economic reconstruction and reconciliation in Zimbabwe, plundering as they do its economic resources for their own benefit.