Resolution on the situation in Mali

2012/2603(RSP) - 20/04/2012 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the military coup in Mali and the suspension of its republican institutions, which put an end to a long democratic process which had begun more than two decades previously.

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

Parliament recalls that during the night of 21-22 March 2012 the President of Mali, Amadou Toumani Touré, was overthrown in a coup, and that in the days following the coup, international pressure and mediation efforts, especially on the part of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), led to the conclusion of a framework agreement on 6 April 2012 between the Comité national pour le redressement et la démocratie (CNRDE) and ECOWAS. This enabled Dioncounda Traore to be installed as interim president and instructed to organise national elections within 40 days. Parliament **welcomes the signing of this framework agreement** and urges all the Malian stakeholders concerned to implement this agreement immediately. It calls for the immediate release of all abductees and the immediate cessation of all violence, and renews its call for all parties in Mali to seek a peaceful solution through appropriate political dialogue.

Members call on the Malian authorities and the **Tuareg liberation movement to reach a peaceful and lasting solution** through constructive dialogue. They note that Tuareg rebels, belonging mainly to the National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), swept through northern Mali after the military coup, pushed government forces out of the three northern regions of Mali (Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu) and unilaterally proclaimed the independence of the new ‘Azawad’ state on 6 April 2012. Parliament **takes the view that there is no military solution to the conflict in the north** and that a solution must be found by means of negotiation.

It calls on the EU and its Member States actively to support the next steps in the transition process, including by **sending an election observation mission to monitor the elections**. The Vice-President /High Representative is urged to speed up the implementation of the various components of the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel, which was adopted in March 2011.

Members note that an Islamist group called Ansar Dine, which has close links with **al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (ACMI), claims to have control of Timbuktu** and is seeking to impose Sharia law in Mali. They express deep concern at this increased terrorist threat in the north of Mali owing to the presence among the rebels of members of al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and condemn all violence and looting, and the atrocities committed against the civilian population, which have been directed against women more than other victims. They particularly condemn the use of abduction and rape as weapons of war.

Parliament calls on the EU and its Member States:

- to pay **particular attention to the situation of women and girls in the Sahel region** and to take all the necessary measures to ensure their protection from every type of violence and from violations of their human rights;
- to consider of the possibility of a European ESDP mission with a mandate from the UN Security Council to provide logistic support to the Malian Army if the Government of Mali requests it and for a possible ECOWAS force or a joint ECOWAS/African Union/United Nations force to secure the areas of Mali not occupied by illegal armed groups. The ESDP mission should help the

countries in the subregion to control their borders more effectively and particularly to combat trafficking in arms, drugs and human beings;

- to support regional coordination in the efforts that they make;
- to support efforts to increase the capacities of the States in the region and to mobilise all available resources to protect the people and promote security and development in the region in cooperation with the States in the region and the inter-State organisations ECOWAS and WAEMU;
- to step up **action to assist the people of the region** by helping to give them better access to water and public education and health services, as well as better infrastructure in order to improve access to the region, since Members feel that the current crisis in Mali originates from **the country's economic and social problems** and that the needs of the people;
- a detailed assessment of the European Union's support to the region.

Noting that **the EU has a vital interest in the security, stability and development of the whole Sahel region**, particularly at a time of serious food shortages which are affecting millions of people there, Members reiterate their serious concern over the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian and food crisis. They call on the Commission and the Member States to **increase and speed up the delivery of humanitarian supplies to the populations in need.** Parliament notes that the Commission is giving an additional EUR 9 million in response to the new humanitarian needs in northern Mali. It points out that urgent efforts are needed in order to open up the humanitarian space and allow food and medical supplies to reach northern Mali and is concerned that, unless such measures are taken rapidly, a major humanitarian crisis may develop which could also have a negative impact on neighbouring countries. Parliament calls for the **opening of a humanitarian corridor** in order to help tens of thousands of people displaced by the fighting in Mali, many of whom have sought refuge in neighbouring countries such as Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso. It also calls for a comprehensive and rapid response to the Sahel humanitarian crisis as a whole.