

Resolution on Serbia: the case of accused war criminal Vojislav Šešelj

2014/2970(RSP) - 27/11/2014 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on Serbia: the case of accused war criminal Šešelj.

The resolution adopted in plenary was tabled on behalf of the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, Greens/EFA and EFDD groups.

Members recalled that Vojislav Šešelj, the president of the Serbian Radical Party, is indicted before the ICTY for persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds, deportation, inhumane acts (forcible transfer) (crimes against humanity), and for murder, torture, cruel treatment, wanton destruction of villages, etc. in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and parts of Vojvodina (Serbia), committed between 1991 and 1993.

Today, after more than eleven years of detention, Šešelj is on provisional release on the grounds of the deterioration of his health, subject to the conditions that he: (i) does not influence witnesses and victims; and (ii) appears before the Chamber as soon as it so orders. However, Šešelj has emphasised that he will not voluntarily return to the Tribunal when requested to do so. In his public statements, he repeatedly called for the creation of ‘**Greater Serbia**’, publicly stating claims on neighbouring countries, including EU Member State Croatia, and inciting hatred against non-Serb people.

Against this background, the **European Parliament strongly condemned Šešelj’s warmongering**, incitement to hatred and encouragement of territorial claims and his attempts to derail Serbia from its European path. It stressed that Šešelj’s recent statements could have the effect of undermining the progress made in regional cooperation and reconciliation and subverting the efforts of recent years.

Members reminded the Serbian authorities of their **obligations under the framework for cooperation with the ICTY** and of Serbia’s obligations as an EU candidate country. In general, it noted with concern that the absence of an adequate political reaction and legal response by the Serbian authorities regarding Šešelj’s behaviour undermines the trust of the victims in the judicial process. It encouraged the Serbian authorities to investigate whether Šešelj has violated Serbian law and to strengthen and fully apply the legislation outlawing hate speech, discrimination and incitement to violence.

Lastly, Parliament encouraged the ICTY to take determined action and to take all necessary measures to bring perpetrators of war crimes to justice which is an indispensable condition for a genuine and lasting reconciliation process.