Resolution on the situation of Rohingya refugees, in particular the plight of children

2018/2756(RSP) - 14/06/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation of Rohingya refugees, in particular the plight of children.

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

Members strongly condemned the **attacks in Myanmar against the Rohingya**, which according to the UNHCR **amount to ethnic cleansing**. Since August 2017 more than 900 000 Rohingya, 534 000 of them children, have fled the violence against them in Rakhine State in Myanmar and have sought refuge in Bangladesh. Rohingya children have experienced or witnessed traumatic events, including in many cases the loss of one or both parents, separation from their families, physical abuse, psychological distress, malnutrition, illness, sexual exploitation and witnessing crimes against humanity in Rakhine State, including the systematic burning of homes, physical attacks and rape perpetrated against Rohingya.

Parliament urged the Myanmar military and security forces to **immediately cease the killings, harassment and rape directed against the Rohingya people** and the burning of their homes, and allow full unhindered access to Rakhine State for international observers and human rights and humanitarian relief organisations

Members **commended** the efforts undertaken by the government and people of Bangladesh to provide refuge and security to Rohingya refugees, and called for **further international support** to those communities hosting the refugees. However, they called on the authorities of Bangladesh to guarantee the Rohingya children full and **sufficient access to quality education in their own language**. They were also extremely concerned at the high incidence in the camps of forced prostitution, human trafficking and sexual violence, including child marriage, partner violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. The authorities of Bangladesh and Myanmar were urged to ensure security of the Rohingya refugees on their territory, and to provide for greater support services for victims of rape and sexual assault. Parliament noted that the **financial responsibility** for assisting the refugee population cannot fall disproportionately on Bangladesh. Accordingly, it called on the international community and international donors to urgently make the necessary funding available.

The resolution went on to insist that the Myanmar government must guarantee the safe, voluntary and dignified **return,** on a basis of full UN oversight, to those who want to return to their land. It recalled that the Rohingya are an integral part of the population of Myanmar and must therefore be recognised as such in law, as recommended by the Advisory Commission. Both governments were urged to fully respect the **principle of non-refoulement**.

Whilst welcoming the Council's adoption on 26 April 2018 of a **framework for targeted measures against officials** responsible for serious human rights violations and strengthening the EU's arms embargo, Parliament reiterated its call on the Commission to consider consequences in the context of the **trade preferences** Myanmar enjoys, including considering launching an investigation under the mechanisms provided for in the Everything But Arms provision. It further called on the UN Security Council to impose a **global comprehensive arms embargo on Myanmar**.

The EEAS and Member States were called upon to **seek accountability in multilateral fora** for those responsible for committing crimes in Myanmar and to take the lead in the UN Security Council and table

a dedicated resolution **referring the entire situation in Myanmar/Rakhine State to the ICC**. Members also wanted to see the urgent establishment of an international, impartial, and independent mechanism to support **investigations** into alleged atrocity crimes.

Lastly, Parliament welcomed the **memorandum of understanding** agreed between Myanmar, the UNHCR and the UNDP on 6 June 2018 as a first concrete step towards the full involvement of the UN agencies in the repatriation process, but wanted the agreement made publicly available as soon as possible.