Resolution on the Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising

2021/2576(RSP) - 11/03/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 568 votes to 79, with 37 abstentions, a resolution on the Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, ECR groups.

Parliament expressed its profound concern at the ongoing suffering of the Syrian people, 10 years after the conflict began. It is particularly concerned that humanitarian needs in Syria have risen by a fifth in the last year alone, and that an additional 4.5 million Syrians now suffer from food insecurity, while 90 % live below the poverty line.

A greater political response is needed from the EU.

Political deadlock

Members expressed its deep concern over the persistent political deadlock and the lack of progress in finding a political solution to the conflict. It stressed that a sustainable solution to the Syrian conflict cannot be achieved militarily. It deeply regrets the Syrian regime's lack of engagement despite repeated engagement and readiness of Syrian opposition representatives to negotiate with the Syrian regime in the drafting of a new Syrian constitution.

Parliament opposed any normalisation of diplomatic relations with the Syrian regime as long as there is no fundamental progress on the ground in Syria, with clear, sustained and credible engagement in an inclusive political process.

Human rights violations

Parliament strongly condemned all atrocities and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, in particular by the Assad Regime, but also by Russian, Iranian and Turkish actors. It called on Russia, Iran and Hezbollah to withdraw all forces and proxies under their command, except for those participating in an international peacekeeping or stabilisation force under mandate of the UN Security Council.

The resolution also condemned the use of rape as a weapon of war against women, whether by the Syrian regime and its militias, or by ISIL/Daesh on Yazidi and Shiite women.

Prosecute war criminals

Reaffirming that those responsible for core international crimes must be duly prosecuted, Members called on the European Commission to present an EU Action Plan on Impunity, with a specific chapter on Syria. This action plan should seek to better coordinate and harmonise Member States' efforts and resources to prosecute war criminals in the EU.

Sanctions

Parliament called on Member States to maintain sanctions on individuals and entities involved in the repression in Syria. The EU and its Member States should renew and expand the list of those subjected to targeted sanctions under the new EU Global Human Rights Sanction Regime, including the Syrian, Russian and Iranian civilian and military commanders who are credibly implicated in war crimes.

Lastly, Member States are reminded that Syria is not a safe country to return to. Any return should be safe, voluntary, dignified and informed, in line with the EU's stated position.