Resolution on the situation in Afghanistan

2021/2712(RSP) - 10/06/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in Afghanistan.

As a reminder, Afghanistan is the largest beneficiary of EU development assistance in the World. Between 2002 and 2020, the EU provided more than EUR 4 billion, and has already pledged EUR 1.2 billion in both long-term and emergency assistance for the 2021-2025 period.

Afghanistan is at a critical juncture, as the confluence of the fragile domestic situation, a deteriorating security situation, intra-Afghan peace talks effectively in a stalemate and the decision to withdraw US and NATO troops by 11 September 2021, which can bring new uncertainties, less stability, danger of intensification of internal conflicts and a vacuum that in the worst case scenario will be filled by the Taliban. Parliament expressed concern that this would be a very worrying perspective for the country and for the sustainability of the socio-political achievements and progress of the last 20 years.

Increased violence

The resolution expressed deep concern and condemned in the strongest terms the alarming increase in violence in Afghanistan, including targeted killings of children, female professionals, journalists and media workers, educators, human rights defenders, civil society, activists, doctors, government officials and members of the judiciary. Parliament urged all sides to immediately agree on a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire.

Deep regret was expressed on the fact that women and girls continue to face significant challenges including domestic, sexual and gender-based violence, forced marriage and limited access to healthcare. Progress in these areas must remain a high priority for the EU.

The resolution stressed that in order to build on the achievements of the last 20 years, the Afghan state should be genuinely committed to fighting and preventing terrorism and armed groups, drug production and trafficking, and addressing the root causes of and managing irregular and forced migration.

Parliament condemned all terrorist activity and all terrorist attacks in Afghanistan. In this regard, it called for a credible and transparent investigation under UN auspices into the recent attack which targeted a girls' school killing 85 people, mostly girls between the age of

11 and 17 and the attack on 12 May 2020 on the maternity wing of the Dasht-e Barchi hospital in Kabul supported by Médecins Sans Frontières.

Withdrawal of troops

Parliament urged the Council, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Commission to prepare and present to Parliament, as soon as possible, a comprehensive strategy for future cooperation with Afghanistan after the withdrawal of NATO Allies' troops, and urged the EU and its Member States, NATO and the US to remain engaged with this objective. Parliament supported, in this regard, the immediate resumption of the peace talks in Doha in order to achieve a political settlement to the conflict and a permanent, nationwide negotiated ceasefire.

Parliament reiterated the need for continuous EU support to assist Afghanistan in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide the Afghans with vaccines, and to help organise vaccination efforts as well as addressing the urgent threats to food security as a result of climate change and droughts.

Lastly, the security of European forces and staff in Afghanistan should be increased, as well as of local staff who work or have worked for Member States' representations or the EU Delegation in the country.