Resolution on the humanitarian situation in Tigray

2021/2902(RSP) - 07/10/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 618 votes to 4, with 58 abstentions, a resolution on the humanitarian situation in Tigray.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR and the Left groups.

Political context

The current state of instability in Ethiopia is the result of a long history of ethnic division and ethnic tension. The current armed conflict between the Federal Government of Ethiopia and the regional administration of Tigray, led by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), has caused hundreds of civilian deaths and the mass displacement of people. Even before the fighting began there were 15.2 million people in need of humanitarian assistance in Ethiopia, 2 million of them in Tigray region. Nearly one million people are living in famine-like conditions and 5.2 million out of 6 million people in Tigray are facing acute food insecurity as a direct consequence of the violence. 91 % of the population is in extreme need of humanitarian aid and 100 000 children will face life-threatening severe acute malnutrition over the next 12 months. The report noted that only 10 % of humanitarian supplies for the embattled Tigray region have been allowed to enter the area over the past month.

Moreover, there are multiple and severe reports of alleged gross violations of human rights, humanitarian law and refugee law perpetrated by all parties to the conflict.

Parliament urged the **immediate cessation of hostilities** by all parties, which is a prerequisite for much-needed improvements to the humanitarian situation in Tigray and other regions, in particular Afar and Amhara. It called for an immediate return to constitutional order and for the establishment of a ceasefire monitoring mechanism.

The resolution also called on national, regional and local actors concerned to **allow immediate and unimpeded humanitarian access** and relief to affected populations in Tigray, ending the de facto blockade on humanitarian assistance and critical supplies, including food, medicine and fuel, and to facilitate assistance to populations in need in the regions of Amhara and Afar. Parliament strongly condemned all attacks on humanitarian aid workers and critical infrastructure, including hospitals and medical facilities, and the widespread looting and destruction of humanitarian aid.

Parliament also condemned the deliberate targeting of civilians by all the belligerent parties, the reported recruitment of children by warring parties, including the Tigrayan forces, and the continued use of rape and sexual violence. It called for accountability for crimes committed during the ongoing conflict and for those responsible to be found and brought to justice. It called on the Eritrean Government to **withdraw its forces immediately** and permanently from Ethiopia.

Recalling that the Ethiopian Government is responsible for the safety and security of the refugees and internally displaced persons on its territory, the resolution called on the Ethiopian authorities to provide **immediate and adequate protection** and assistance to the thousands of Eritrean refugees and asylum seekers displaced from camps in Tigray and to determine the fate and whereabouts of the thousands of unaccounted Eritrean refugees. Parliament also called for the international and regional borders to remain open for the safe and free movement of civilians.

The Ethiopian Government is called on to:

- ensure that those responsible for attacks targeting specific ethnic and religious groups are held accountable;

- set up a **court-like restorative justice body** which would be charged with the task of investigating human rights abuses which took place during the conflict;

- sign and ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Member States are urged to:

- consider adopting measures to protect human rights and to ensure that perpetrators of human rights abuses are held accountable;

- **halt exports of arms and surveillance technology to Ethiopia** that are being used to facilitate attacks on civilians and perpetrate human rights violations.

While strongly welcoming the Commission's life-saving support in the region, Parliament supported a further extension of it and called for the mobilisation of additional funding of at least EUR 30 million from the EU Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve in order to address the most acute needs of the people affected by the conflict in Tigray and the other areas directly affected by the spread of the northern Ethiopia conflict, with a particular focus on the bordering regions of Afar and Amhara.