Resolution on the situation in the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

2004/2624(RSP) - 16/12/2004 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The resolution had been tabled by the PES, Greens/ALE, EPP-ED, UEN, and GUE/NGL groups.

Referring to the fact that less than a week after the UN Conference on the African Great Lakes on 20 November 2004 in Dar es Salaam where solemn undertakings were given, Rwandan troops again entered the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), for the third time in ten years, Parliament condemns the unilateral military action by Rwanda and calls for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Rwandan troops from Congolese territory. It considers that this unilateral action may have serious consequences for the peace process and stability in the Great Lakes region, and calls on the Government of Rwanda to respect the territorial integrity of the DRC, and on all parties to the conflict to respect and comply with the 2003 peace agreements and United Nations Security Council resolutions.

Parliament is shocked by the sexual violence and rape used as weapons of war against Congolese women. It strongly condemns the numerous instances of sexual violence and rapes committed in the DRC by armed groups and by certain members of the military and civilian personnel of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). It welcomes the decision by the United Nations to carry out an inquiry into the allegations of acts of sexual violence against women and, pending the conclusions of the inquiry, calls for the persons involved to be suspended.

The Government of the DRC is called upon to:

- implement an emergency medical programme for victims of sexual violence in the eastern part of the DRC;
- bring to justice all the individuals responsible for acts of violence;
- respect the timetable for the elections so that the people of the DRC can freely and democratically choose their leaders.

The resolution calls on the Council:

- to take all measures to support the African Union which are necessary in order to organise, in liaison with MONUC and under a UN mandate, the disarmament of the illegal armed groups within the territory of the DRC, particularly those emanating from the former Rwandan authorities (the Interahamwe and ex-FAR);
- to consider, as a matter of urgency, a new European Union mission to the DRC, along the same lines as the ARTEMIS operation, to increase security in the east of the country, particularly along the border between Rwanda and the DRC.

Parliament hopes that the armed forces of Member States of the EU will participate actively in the formation of the peace-keeping forces of the African Union and of the Congolese unified national army. In view of the fact that, according to the report by the United Nations Security Council, illegal arms continue to flood into the DRC from abroad. Parliament calls for the arms embargo to be respected and for effective arrangements to be instituted to control international and national arms shipments.

Lastly, Parliament calls on the United Nations Security Council to impose sanctions (travel restrictions, bans on banking services) on persons who are known to have participated in the pillaging of assets and on any person whose actions jeopardise the peace process.