Resolution on refugees from Iraq

2007/2519(RSP) - 15/02/2007 - Text adopted by Parliament, topical subjects

The European Parliament adopted by 74 votes to 0, with 1 abstention, a resolution on refugees from Iraq.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP-ED, PES, ALDE, UEN, Greens/EFA and GUE/NGL groups.

The resolution recalls that the United Nations estimates that 1.8 million Iraqis are displaced within Iraq and up to 2 million Iraqis have fled the country. Moreover, 50 000 people try to leave Iraq every month. However, the neighbouring countries have restricted access for refugees to seek asylum, forcing many to return to Iraq or remain trapped at the borders.

In this context, the Parliament urges Iraq's bordering countries to abide by their legal duty immediately to admit refugees, particularly those stranded at their borders and belonging to specially targeted minorities such as stateless Palestinians or religious and ethnic minorities.

The resolution welcomes the recent UNHCR appeal to mobilise additional international support in order to fund its work for uprooted Iraqis within their country and in neighbouring States and for foreign refugees in Iraq. The Commission and the Member States are called upon to support the UNHCR's protection efforts focused on minimum protection from detention and refoulement and non-penalisation for illegal entry, as well as access to education, adequate housing, basic health care facilities and other basic services for those inside and outside Iraq.

Welcoming the holding of an international conference on addressing the humanitarian needs of refugees and IDPs inside Iraq and in neighbouring countries in Geneva on 17 April 2007, MEPs urge the Council, the Commission, the authorities in the region and the international community to fully participate in that conference and provide appropriate financial support.

As a demonstration of international burden-sharing, Member States and the international community are called upon to contribute to the resettlement of Iraqi refugees and stateless persons, including the Palestinian refugees from Iraq stranded in the region.

Lastly, MEPs call on the Iraqi Government, local regional and religious authorities and the Multi-National Coalition Forces in Iraq to take immediate steps to improve security for all the refugees and IDPs in Iraq and end discriminatory practices.