

Thursday 23 October 2008

17. Calls on the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to investigate atrocity crimes committed in the Kivus and Ituri since June 2003 and prosecute those most clearly responsible, ensuring that this includes the principal militia chiefs who have not been arrested and those responsible for massacres and sexual violence;
18. Calls for the effective establishment of monitoring mechanisms, such as the Kimberley Process for the certification of the origin of natural resources imported into the EU market;
19. Calls on the Council and every Member State to provide special aid to the populations of the eastern parts of DRC;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative for the CFSP, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the institutions of the African Union, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Human Rights Council and the governments and parliaments of the Great Lakes region.

Burma

P6_TA(2008)0527

European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2008 on Burma

(2010/C 15 E/20)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolutions of 19 June 2008 ⁽¹⁾, 24 April 2008 ⁽²⁾, 27 September 2007 ⁽³⁾, 21 June 2007 ⁽⁴⁾ and 14 December 2006 ⁽⁵⁾ on Burma,
 - having regard to the Council's Conclusions on Burma/Myanmar of 29 April 2008, adopted at the General Affairs and External relations Council in Luxembourg, and the Council Common Position 2006/318/CFSP of 27 April 2006 renewing restrictive measures against Burma/Myanmar ⁽⁶⁾,
 - having regard to the report of 3 September 2008 (A/63/341) by the United Nation's (UN) Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Tomás Ojea Quintana,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas 24 October 2008 marks the 13th anniversary of the unjust incarceration as a political prisoner of Aung San Suu Kyi, General Secretary of the National League for Democracy (NLD); whereas an additional 2 120 individuals continue to face imprisonment in atrocious conditions merely for expressing the wish to bring democracy to Burma; and whereas on 3 October 2008 Navanethem Pillay, newly appointed UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, formally appealed to the Burmese military authorities to release all political prisoners,
 - B. whereas, on the anniversary of Aung San Suu Kyi's captivity, leaders of Asian and European countries will convene the Seventh Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) in China on 24 and 25 October 2008,
 - C. whereas the Burmese military junta is purposely refusing to take any preventive or protective measures to safeguard against the severe famine threatening Chin state in the West of the country,
 - D. whereas in September 2008 the Burmese authorities staged a five-day crackdown on widespread protests that had begun six weeks earlier,

⁽¹⁾ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0312.

⁽²⁾ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2008)0178.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 219 E, 28.8.2008, p. 311.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 146 E, 12.6.2008, p. 383.

⁽⁵⁾ OJ C 317 E, 23.12.2006, p. 902.

⁽⁶⁾ OJ L 116, 29.4.2006, p. 77.

Thursday 23 October 2008

- E. whereas the human rights situation has continued to deteriorate, political repression has escalated and the military junta has failed to deliver on promises made to the international community in the aftermath of the Saffron revolution of September 2007,
- F. whereas in 2003 the United States forbade the import of all Burmese clothing, which is manufactured in conditions of virtual slavery, and whereas the Council of the European Union has hitherto failed to reach consensus among Member States on taking equivalent measures,
- G. whereas the Secretary-General of the United Nations has announced that he may cancel a visit to Burma planned for December 2008 should there be no discernible improvement in the national situation in the months ahead,
- H. whereas the UN revealed in August 2008 that the Burmese military authorities were fraudulently seizing a percentage of humanitarian aid remitted to Burma through falsely weighted currency exchange rates,
- I. whereas the Burmese military authorities have paralysed Internet access to the free media, impeded the circulation of independent information sources and imprisoned so-called cyber-dissidents for attempting freely to express their political opinions,
1. Condemns the continued detention of Aung San Suu Kyi, who has been under intermittent house arrest since her victory at the last democratic elections in 1990, and insists upon her immediate release;
 2. Deplores the fact that the number of political prisoners has increased from 1 300 to 2 000 in the aftermath of the Saffron Revolution, and that, despite the release of veteran journalist and NLD secretary U Win Tin and six other leaders in September 2008, 23 NLD members were subsequently arrested;
 3. Denounces the arbitrary charges behind the arrests of many dissidents and the harsh conditions of detention of political prisoners including widespread use of torture and hard labour; expresses deep concern about the systematic denial of medical treatment to political prisoners, and calls for the International Committee of the Red Cross to be allowed to resume visits;
 4. Urges the ASEM states at their Summit to jointly appeal to the Burmese military authorities to release all political prisoners;
 5. Strongly condemns the ethnic cleansing directed against the Karen minority, including those seeking refuge in neighbouring Thailand; calls in this respect on the international community to exert stronger pressure on the junta to stop military actions against civilians and to increase humanitarian assistance to affected populations, including by cross-border mechanisms, where necessary;
 6. Calls on the Commission to insist on the lifting of all restrictions on aid delivery imposed by the Burmese military authorities on areas afflicted by Cyclone Nargis, and to present a full report on the efficacy of its assistance and the extent of assistance still required;
 7. Calls on the Burmese authorities urgently to attend to their humanitarian responsibilities, in particular with respect to the impending famine in Chin state;
 8. Notes that 37 visits by UN envoys in the past 20 years have not secured a single reform by the Burmese State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), and draws attention to the UN Security Council Presidential Statement of 11 October 2007 on the situation in Myanmar (S/PRST/2007/37), which has also been ignored by the SPDC; calls for timelines and benchmarks to be set for reform, and for the UN Security Council to resolve to take further action on Burma if the timelines and benchmarks are not met;

Thursday 23 October 2008

9. Calls on the Burmese Government to progressively implement the four core human rights elements requested by the UN Special Rapporteur, namely: freedom of expression, assembly and association; release of prisoners of conscience; transition to a multiparty democratic and civil government; and an independent and impartial judiciary;
10. Calls on the Secretary-General of the United Nations to press ahead with a second visit to Burma in December 2008, irrespective of prevailing conditions, in order to make an urgent personal appeal for the release of all political prisoners and the full inclusion of the NLD in preparations for the 2010 elections, and to emphasise that UN demands must be met;
11. Calls on the European Council to use its meeting on 11-12 December 2008 to review Council Regulation (EC) No 194/2008 of 25 February 2008 renewing and strengthening the restrictive measures in respect of Burma/Myanmar⁽¹⁾, to broaden targeted sanctions to include access to international banking services for companies, conglomerates and businesses owned by or closely linked to the Burmese military, to halt all imports of Burmese manufactured clothing, and to terminate access by selected generals and their families to business opportunities, health care, consumer purchases, and foreign education;
12. Calls on the Commission to explain what action it intends to take with respect to the UN admission that a percentage of all humanitarian aid remitted to Burma is falling victim to state-sponsored exchange rate abuse;
13. Expresses grave concern that the 'Investigation Body' established by the Burmese military authorities to investigate the deaths, arrests and disappearances linked to the peaceful demonstrations of September 2007 has produced no response, and calls on the Burmese authorities to facilitate the operation of a UN-sanctioned investigative commission;
14. Urges the Governments of China, India and Russia to use their considerable economic and political leverage with the Burmese authorities in order to bring about substantial improvements in the country and to cease the supply of weaponry and other strategic resources;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the EU Special Envoy for Burma, the SPDC, the Governments of the Association of South East Asian Nations' (ASEAN) and ASEM member states, the ASEM secretariat, ASEAN's Inter-Parliamentary Myanmar Caucus, Aung San Suu Kyi, the NLD, the UN Secretary-General, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 66, 10.3.2008, p. 1.