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6. Calls on the European Council and the Commission to support the GRP in its efforts to advance the peace negotiations, including by means of facilitation if requested, as well as through support for the International Monitoring Team responsible for overseeing the ceasefire between the military and the MILF;
7. Suggests that the role of the International Monitoring Team could be enhanced through a stronger mandate for investigations and through an agreed policy of making its findings public;
8. Calls on the GRP to increase development aid to Mindanao in order to improve the desperate living conditions of the local population and welcomes the financial support of more than EUR 13 million in food and non-food aid which the EU has given to Mindanao since fighting restarted in August 2008;
9. Expresses its grave concern at the hundreds of cases of extrajudicial killings of political activists and journalists that have occurred in recent years in the Philippines, and the role that the security forces have played in orchestrating and perpetrating those murders;
10. Calls on the GRP to investigate cases of extrajudicial executions and enforced disappearances; calls at the same time on the GRP to put into place an independent monitoring mechanism to oversee the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of such acts;
11. Calls on the GRP to adopt measures to end the systematic intimidation and harassment of political and human rights activists, members of civil society, journalists and witnesses in criminal prosecutions, and to ensure truly effective witness protection;
12. Reiterates its request to the Philippine authorities to allow the UN special bodies dealing with human rights protection unrestricted access to the country; urges, also, the authorities to swiftly adopt and implement laws to incorporate the international human rights instruments (e.g. against torture and enforced disappearances) which have been ratified into national law;
13. Calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that the EU's financial assistance towards economic development in the Philippines is accompanied by scrutiny of possible violations of economic, social and cultural rights, with special attention being paid to encouraging dialogue and inclusion of all groups in society;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the President and Government of the Republic of the Philippines, the MILF, the NDFP, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the governments of the ASEAN Member States.

Expulsions of NGOs from Darfur

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European Parliament resolution of 12 March 2009 on expulsions of NGOs from Darfur

(2010/C 87 E/39)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union following the decision of the International Criminal Court (ICC) concerning the arrest warrant against Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir on 6 March 2009,

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- having regard to Commissioner Louis Michel's statement of 5 March 2009 on the expulsion of humanitarian NGOs from Sudan,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Sudan/Darfur, expressing in particular its continuing support for the ICC,
 - having regard to the Rome Statute of the ICC and its entry into force on 1 July 2002,
 - having regard to UN Security Council Resolution S/Res/1593 (2005), adopted on 31 March 2005, referring the situation in Darfur to the ICC,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 4 March 2009 the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber issued an arrest warrant against Sudan's President Omar Hassan al-Bashir in connection with alleged crimes against humanity and war crimes in Sudan's conflict-ridden province of Darfur,
- B. whereas, as a reaction to the ICC decision, the Sudanese Government decided to expel 13 leading NGOs from Darfur,
- C. whereas aid agencies in Darfur are running the largest humanitarian operation in the world; whereas the United Nations reports that up to 4.7 million people, including 2.7 million internally displaced people, are in need of assistance,
- D. whereas the expulsion of the aid agencies could lead to increased mortality and morbidity resulting from the interruption of health services and outbreaks of infectious diseases, such as diarrhoea and respiratory infections; whereas the consequences of the expulsion may include declining immunisation coverage and increasing mortality among children if they do not have access to therapeutic feeding and nutrition services,
- E. whereas the NGOs have been expelled at a time when their services are vitally needed, particularly as there is currently a meningitis epidemic in West Darfur; whereas the expulsion will leave sufferers with extremely limited or no access to medical treatment,
- F. whereas the UN's 'Responsibility to Protect' doctrine provides that where national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations, others have a responsibility to provide the protection needed,
- G. whereas the Government of Sudan, as a member of the United Nations, is obliged to cooperate with the ICC by virtue of Resolution S/Res/1593 (2005), which the Security Council adopted under its Chapter 7 powers,
- H. deeply dismayed by the fact that, since the issuing of the arrest warrant, the Government of Sudan has repeatedly refused to cooperate with the ICC and has indeed multiplied its acts of defiance towards the ICC and the international community,
1. Strongly condemns the expulsion of 13 humanitarian aid agencies from Darfur in response to the international arrest warrant issued by the ICC against President al-Bashir on 4 March 2009;

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2. Demands the immediate and unconditional release of all the aid workers of the Belgian section of Médecines sans Frontières, who were kidnapped on 11 March 2009 in the offices of Médecines sans Frontières Belgium in Saraf Umra, 200 kilometres to the west of El-Facher, the capital of North Darfur;
 3. Is very concerned at the immediate impact of the expulsions on the provision of the humanitarian aid that is vital to hundreds of thousands of people;
 4. Demands that the Government of Sudan to immediately reverse its decision to expel the 13 aid agencies and allow them to continue their essential work in ensuring the survival of vulnerable populations in Darfur; calls on the Council and Commission to step up their efforts vis-à-vis the African Union, the League of Arab States and China to prevail upon the Sudanese Government to do so;
 5. Calls on the Sudanese Government to take positive steps to ensure that human rights defenders in Sudan are not persecuted if they speak favourably of the ICC decision, and to refrain from any harassment or intimidation of human rights defenders;
 6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the EU Special Representative for Sudan, the Government of Sudan, the governments and parliaments of the Member States and the members of the UN Security Council, the African Union institutions, the institutions of the League of Arab States and the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.
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