

Thursday 5 April 2001

23. Situation in Somalia and attack against 'Médecins sans frontières'

B5-0263, 0276, 0284, 0290, 0292 and 0301/2001

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Somalia and the taking hostage of humanitarian aid workers

The European Parliament,

- A. whereas, in the latest incident, nine humanitarian aid workers were abducted in Mogadishu on 27 March, after gunmen loyal to Musa Sudi Yalahow, a faction leader whose militias control part of the city, had attacked the compound of Médecins sans Frontières in northern Mogadishu; whereas seven of the hostages have since been released, but whereas the two UN staff are still being held captive;
 - B. whereas the security situation in Somalia, and particularly in Mogadishu, has deteriorated in recent weeks, and whereas several armed clashes, including the 22 March attack on the provisional headquarters of the Transitional National Government in Mogadishu, have left at least 20 people dead, most of them civilians;
 - C. having regard to the statements made by the UN Security Council demanding the 'immediate release' of the hostages, 'vigorously' condemning their abduction and calling for the perpetrators to be prosecuted,
 - D. whereas the persons taken hostage were in Somalia in order to carry out their professional duties on a strictly humanitarian basis,
 - E. whereas their abduction constitutes a serious human rights violation,
 - F. whereas, for many years now, Somalia has been going through a period of great instability, with conflicts between rival clans, and whereas this has resulted in hundreds of thousands of deaths,
 - G. whereas the Transitional National Government has been officially recognised by the UN as the only government of Somalia,
 - H. having regard to the persistent difficulties encountered by the Transitional National Government to stamp its authority in a peaceful manner on the country, which continues to exist in an extremely difficult and unstable situation caused by the presence of armed militia, especially in Mogadishu, and by the proliferation of landmines,
 - I. whereas the political, socio-economic and humanitarian situation in Somalia requires the international community and, in particular, the European Union to pay specific attention to it in order to encourage the peace process, the transitional institutions and the restoration and reconstruction of the country as an entity, with respect for its territorial integrity,
1. Firmly condemns the attack on the compound of Médecins sans Frontières, the deaths resulting therefrom and the abduction of UN and humanitarian aid workers;
 2. Expresses its condolences to the families of the victims and its support for the hostages and their families;
 3. Calls for the immediate and unconditional release of the hostages still detained and for a guarantee of their safety and physical integrity;
 4. Calls on the Transitional National Government to persist in its efforts to secure the release of the hostages;
 5. Deplores and condemns unreservedly the use of violence and the instances of banditry perpetrated by the armed militia in Somalia and calls on the various faction leaders to refrain from using violence against the inhabitants of their own country;

Thursday 5 April 2001

6. Urges all the parties involved to guarantee total respect for human rights and for international humanitarian laws and also to guarantee the safety of humanitarian aid workers and United Nations staff working in Somalia and to grant them direct access to that country's inhabitants;
 7. Reiterates its conviction that only through dialogue and negotiation between all the representatives of the Somali people will it be possible for the conditions for the reconstruction and unity of Somalia to be created;
 8. Calls on the Somali Transitional National Government to open, as quickly as possible, a constructive dialogue on the path towards peace, stability and national reconciliation with all the representatives of Somali society and, in particular, to open negotiations with the authorities of Somaliland and Puntland with a view to reconstructing the country and restoring national unity;
 9. Calls, in particular, on the administrations of Somaliland and Puntland to open a constructive dialogue with the Transitional National Government and on all the parties in Somalia to cooperate and to renounce the use of arms in order to address serious political, social and economic problems in the country and to tackle together issues relating to aid management, education, health and the economy;
 10. Calls on the Somali faction leaders, in particular those based in Mogadishu, to cease armed operations, to establish constructive relations with the transitional institutions and to join the peace process so that peace and stability may be restored;
 11. Emphasises the need for vigilance so that Somali territory is not used for criminal activities and for the destabilisation of neighbouring countries;
 12. Calls on all the countries in the region to refrain from supporting activities directed against the transitional institutions or activities which might imperil Somali unity and stability in the sub-region;
 13. Vigorously condemns all supplies of illegal arms to Somalia and calls on the international community to guarantee total respect for the arms embargo;
 14. Calls on the international community to step up its humanitarian aid and its cooperation activities in order to boost progress along the path towards national reconstruction, including through NGOs and local communities;
 15. Calls on the Council, the Member States and the Commission to take the requisite measures to support the Somali people in its search for peace and democracy;
 16. Calls for the European Union to take a consistent political approach to Somalia, as it did during the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, in order to promote dialogue and negotiations with a view to resolving the major and most urgent problems affecting that country, for example by including Somalia within the remit of the Council Presidency's special representative, Senator Rino Serri, or by appointing another special representative for Somalia;
 17. Calls on the European Union to supply whatever financial and technical aid is necessary to ensure the success of the peace initiative tabled by IGAD and Djibouti;
 18. Calls on the European Union to help the Transitional National Government to establish its authority throughout Somali territory, in particular by contributing to the UNDP's civil protection programme which seeks to improve judicial standards and practices, to promote the enforcement of laws, to support civil society, to bring about the demobilisation of the armed groups and to step up operations to remove landmines;
 19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, Commission, the UN Secretary-General, the Somali Transitional National Government, the OAU, IGAD, the Djibouti Government and to Médecins sans Frontières.
-