

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

16.01.2006

B6-0056/2006

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Pasqualina Napoletano and Elena Valenciano

on behalf of the PSE Group

on Egypt: violence against Sudanese refugees

PE 368.282v01-00

European Parliament resolution on Egypt: violence against Sudanese refugees

The European Parliament,

- having regard to all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, including Resolution 1593 of 31 March 2005 on the situation in Sudan and the report of the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur to the UN Secretary-General Council Resolution 1564 (2005),

- having regard to the European Parliament's resolution of September 2004 on the humanitarian situation in Sudan and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly Resolution ACP-EU 3777/05 of April 2005 on the situation in Sudan,

- having regard to the EU-Egypt Association Agreement signed in Luxembourg on 25 June 2001, which has been in force since 1 June 2004,

- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas, on 30 December 2005, Egyptian police attacked Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers who had been camping in a public park near the offices of the UNHCR in Cairo, whereas eyewitnesses have reported over 200 deaths, but that according to official information from Egyptian authorities only 27 people, all Sudanese and most of them women, children and aged persons, were killed,

B. whereas between 2000 and 2500 refugees were arrested and taken to detention centres outside the capital following the incident,

C. whereas, following the signing of the Peace Agreement between North and South Sudan in 2005, the Egyptian Government claimed that the Sudanese refugees residing in its country were no longer entitled to refugee status, whereas this was attempt to force the removal of the refugees back to Sudan which ignited the violence, with the Egyptian police beating refugees, including women and children, with batons,

D. whereas UNHCR were asked to clarify the legal status of the refugees in Egypt, the exact number of whom is not known but estimated by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to be anywhere between 200,000 and 4 million,

E. whereas the UNHCR, the Sudanese Government and the Egyptian Government signed a tripartite agreement on 12 January 2006 preparing for the voluntary repatriation of 70,000 refugees to the South of Sudan in the first part of 2006,

F. whereas, the EU has long put pressure on North African countries, including Egypt, to curb the levels of immigrants who transit through their countries to the EU, ce qui fait que ce sont ces pays de l'Afrique du Nord qui doivent faire face au coût économique et social de l'intégration de ces flux des populations étrangères,

G. whereas EU Governments are obliged to live up to their international obligations under the Geneva Convention when requests are received by individual asylum and refugee status seekers, as well as by third countries to host refugees,

H. whereas the situation in Sudan as a whole remains extremely unstable, with continuing violence in Darfur and a fragile peace between North and South,

1. Condemns the violence of the Egyptian police and insists that the situation could and should have been resolved peacefully;
2. Calls on the Egyptian government to launch an investigation into the killings of at least 27 Sudanese protesters on 30 December 2005, as well as the injury of dozens more;
3. Recalls that Egypt is a state party to the Convention against Torture and other international agreements which expressly prohibit the forcible return of anyone to a country where they would be at risk of torture or ill-treatment;
4. Asks the Egyptian authorities, therefore, to halt the forced deportation to Sudan of up to 650 Sudanese nationals, as the group is believed to include asylum-seekers and refugees recognised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), who would be at risk of torture if returned to Sudan;
5. Recognises the mandate of the UNHCR and the importance of its efforts to protect and promote lasting solutions for refugees and other uprooted people, who are its concern, and expresses its support for the UNHCR's work;
6. Criticises the UNHCR in this case, however, for having been slow to find a solution for the Sudanese refugees and asylum seekers and calls for further clarification on the legal status of refugees following the ceasing of hostilities in the country from which they fled, as was the case for the Sudanese refugees;
7. Calls on the international community and EU Governments in particular to live up to their international obligations under the Geneva Convention when hosting refugees and when requests are received by third countries to host refugees;
8. Expects EU partner countries to ensure that all people making an application for asylum at their borders are guaranteed safety and a fair procedure in accordance with international Conventions and accepted principles of international refugee law;
9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to establish a true partnership with the UNHCR by offering both political and financial support and calls for EU funding to ensure predictability, flexibility and geographical balance, including non-emergency situations, as well as a smooth transition from emergency relief to reconstruction and development;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments of Egypt and Sudan and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.