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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 Simon Coveney, Charles Tannock, Bernd Posselt, Eija-Riitta Korhola,

on behalf of the PPE-DE Group

on Iraq - humanitarian situation of refugees

European Parliament resolution on Iraq - humanitarian situation of refugees

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolution on the situation in Iraq,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas since the fall of the Baathist regime, Iraqis have been plagued by the proliferation of armed militias and criminal and terrorist organisations acting with virtual impunity, constituting major challenges to law and order and a threat to the security of the civilian population,
- B. whereas criminal activities include armed robberies, kidnappings for ransom, harassment, the killing of persons involved in the political process or reconstruction activities, sabotage attacks against civilian infrastructure such as electricity or oil pipelines and full-scale attacks involving indiscriminate bombs and/or other explosives against civilians and as a result many Iraqis continue to flee, primarily to Jordan and Syria but also to Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Iran and further afield,
- C. whereas according to UNHCR, the number of Iraqi refugees worldwide is important, even when not taking into account the approximately more than a million displaced Iraqis in the region and whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has only a very limited international presence in Iraq at the present time with little capacity to monitor what happens to returnees, refugees or internally displaced people,
- D. whereas many groups continue to suffer persecution in Iraq, particularly women, Iraqis employed by foreign contractors, the UN or other international organisations including NGOs, professionals, and ethnic and religious minorities,
- E. whereas Jews, Mandeans and Christians (including Assyrians, Armenian, Greek orthodox and other Christian minorities) are increasingly experiencing discrimination with regard to access to the labour market or basic social services and many are afraid of persecution by insurgent groups as well as Islamist militias, which have gained de facto control over entire neighbourhoods in various cities and villages in Iraq; whereas, as part of increasing tensions between Sunnis and Shiite, individuals may also be solely targeted on the basis of their membership of these three non-Muslim groups,
- F. whereas It has been estimated that within Iraq itself there are thousands of refugees from Palestine, Turkey, Iran and Syria, and their protection is a mounting problem with increasing reports from UNHCR of harassment, arrest and detention; whereas the continued fighting and localised ethnic and religious tensions are resulting in their further displacement,

- G. whereas the Syrian Government has, in certain cases, refused to allow the Palestinians entry into the country, leaving the refugees stranded at the border and whereas hundreds more are expected to attempt to make the hazardous journey,
1. Considers the support of the international community is vital in easing the suffering of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) or those fleeing the country as well as the increased pressure on countries like Syria and Jordan, which together host a significant number of Iraqi refugees;
 2. Urges the authorities in the region and the international community to provide substantial aid and take an active part in a UNHCR conference on the Iraqi humanitarian crisis due to be held in Geneva in mid-April; asks the Council and the Commission to fully participate in this Conference and provide appropriate financial support;
 3. Reiterates the need for a strong partnership between UNHCR and the Muslim world;
 4. Calls on the Saudi leaders, given Saudi Arabia's long tradition of protecting asylum seekers and refugees and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, to use their influence to help find a solution for the tragedy of some 15,000 Palestinians in Iraq living in desperate conditions and unable to cross the border;
 5. Welcomes the UNHCR initiative of January 2007 of launching a \$60 million appeal to mobilise international support to fund its work for uprooted Iraqis within their country and in neighbouring States and for foreign refugees in Iraq;
 6. Invites many donor countries which have been reluctant to face up to a regional Iraqi refugee crisis to take into consideration the fact that the Iraqi authorities and the governments affected in the neighbourhood appear unable to fully cope with the crisis and to reconsider the need to provide financial assistance to help those host countries in order to share the burden of this refugees problem by offering third-country resettlement opportunities to those refugees;
 7. Calls on the Iraqi Government, local regional and religious authorities and the coalition Multi-National Forces in Iraq to take immediate steps to improve security for all the refugees and internally displaced people in Iraq and end discriminatory practices;
 8. Recognizes the contribution of the regional Kurdish authorities in assisting non-Muslim communities who are internally displaced;
 9. Instruct its President to forward the present resolution to the Council, the Commission, the UN Secretary General, the UNHCR, the Iraqi Government, the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and the governments of Syria and Jordan.