



Plenary sitting

B8-0300/2017

15.5.2017

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the Dadaab refugee camp
(2017/2687(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the Dadaab refugee camp
(2017/2687(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Nairobi declaration of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development for East Africa (IGAD) of 25 March 2017 on durable solutions for Somali refugees and the reintegration of returnees to Somalia,
 - having regard to the UN New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants adopted on 19 September 2016,
 - having regard to the joint communiqué of the Ministerial Tripartite Commission for the Voluntary Repatriation of Somali Refugees living in Kenya issued on 25 June 2016,
 - having regard to the outcome of the EU Valletta summit on migration of 11-12 November 2015,
 - having regard to the Declaration of the Ministerial Conference of the Khartoum Process (The EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative), made in Rome on 28 November 2014,
 - having regard to the Tripartite Agreement on voluntary repatriations signed on 10 November 2013 by the Governments of Somalia and Kenya and the UNHCR,
 - having regard to the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa,
 - having regard to the UN Global Compact on responsibility-sharing for refugees,
 - having regard to the 11th European Development Fund (EDF) National Indicative Programme of Somalia and East Africa,
 - having regard to EU humanitarian funding for refugee response in Kenya,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the Horn of Africa region, with nearly 250 million inhabitants and a rapidly growing population, hosts the largest number of internally displaced persons and refugees in Africa and the world; whereas the region faces challenges of irregular migration, forced displacement, trafficking in human beings, people smuggling, terrorism and violent conflict;
- B. whereas the challenges have numerous drivers which vary according to local contexts, but which are commonly rooted in a lack of socio-economic opportunities, poverty, instability and climate change;
- C. whereas the Dadaab refugee complex was established in 1991 as a temporary solution to those seeking shelter and fleeing persecution, violence and instability in the East Africa

region, and most notably to those fleeing the civil war in Somalia; whereas the complex currently comprises five different camps of different peoples and covers an area of 50 square kilometres, with the Hagadera, Dagahaley and Ifo camps being the oldest and most densely populated;

- D. whereas although Dadaab was intended to host around 90 000 people, according to UN estimates the complex currently has a population of approximately 260 000, of which 95 % originate from Somalia and 60 % are under the age of 18; whereas, in May 2016 Kenya disbanded its department for refugee affairs, which was responsible for registration, meaning that tens of thousands of thousands of people have not been registered, which could in fact increase these numbers further;
- E. whereas refugees at the camp are at risk of violence, while women and children are particularly vulnerable;
- F. whereas for over two decades, Somalia has been affected by severe instability and the absence of state structures, the impact of which has been compounded by recurrent natural hazards linked to climate change; whereas these issues have challenged the resilience and the ability of Somalia's most vulnerable communities to cope, and have become major drivers of displacement within Somalia and towards neighbouring countries.
- G. whereas after three decades the Somali refugee situation is among the most protracted in the world, with a third generation of refugees being born in exile; whereas nearly one million Somalis are displaced in the region, and a further 1.1 million are displaced within Somalia itself;
- H. whereas Somalia has been among the top five refugee-producing countries globally over the last 15 years, with 1.1 million refugees currently registered, of whom more than 80 % are hosted within the Horn of Africa and Yemen region; whereas Kenya currently plays host to some 500 000 refugees, with numbers continuing to rise on account of growing insecurity in the region, notably in South Sudan;
- I. whereas, the entire East Africa region is experiencing a major drought, with famine having been declared in parts of South Sudan, threatening up to a million people; whereas a pre-famine alert has been issued for Somalia, which is facing its third famine in 25 years, with the government reporting that 6.2 million people are in need of emergency food assistance; whereas the Kenyan President, Uhuru Kenyatta, has declared the country's drought a national disaster with 2.7 million people facing severe hunger; whereas it is anticipated that the situation is likely to deteriorate in all three countries;
- J. whereas according to the United Nations, the drought in Somalia has created additional internal displacement and more than 683 000 people have been forced to leave their homes since November 2016; whereas some 250 000 people died during the last famine in 2011;
- K. whereas on 6 May 2016, the Kenyan Government announced its decision to close Dadaab 'with the briefest of delays', citing security concerns and the need to end the protracted refugee situation in the region; whereas, however, on 30 November 2016 the

Kenyan Government announced that closure of the Dadaab camp would be delayed by six months until May 2017; whereas since the IGAD summit of 25 March 2017, all efforts are now focused on the importance of finding a regional and sustainable solution for Somali refugees;

- L. whereas the international community, including the EU, has expressed understanding of the Kenyan Government's concerns and reasons for closing the camp, but has also highlighted that returns to Somalia must be conducted in line with international standards, in that they must be voluntary and informed, with returnees having access to objective, neutral and pertinent information, that they must be done in safety, with dignity, and in a sustainable manner, and that returnees must be aware of what will happen should they decide not to volunteer;
- M. whereas on 9 February 2017 the Kenyan High Court ruled, in response to a petition by two Kenyan human rights organisations – the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights and Kituo Cha Sheria – that the Kenyan Government's orders to close the Dadaab refugee camp were discriminatory and amounted to a collective punishment, as well as being excessive, arbitrary and disproportionate;
- N. whereas the debate surrounding the closure of Dadaab has put the spotlight on the slow pace of implementation of the Tripartite Agreement which was signed by the UNHCR and the Governments of Kenya and Somalia in 2013 and aimed at enabling voluntary returns of Somalis into stable areas of Somalia, an issue that has been openly criticised by the Kenyan Government and other stakeholders;
- O. whereas since the UNHCR started supporting voluntary returns of Somali refugees in 2014, approximately 65 000 people have returned, but the aim to increase the rate of sustainable returns will depend on the situation in Somalia;
- P. whereas in late August 2016, Somali authorities in Jubaland suspended repatriations to the regional capital, Kismaayo, having been faced with an influx of refugees; whereas, according to the UNHCR almost 70 % of returnees are children;
- Q. whereas the closure of Dadaab will have repercussions in other neighbouring countries, such as Ethiopia, which currently hosts some 245 000 Somali refugees, possibly giving rise to a new influx; whereas this situation shows the interconnected nature of issues relating to refugees, border management and stability, and highlights the need for enhanced regional cooperation in order to address these issues, let alone in the light of the decision to close Dadaab;
- R. whereas for many refugees, especially those from rural areas, the prospect of a return is contingent on their ability to reclaim their land in a country where the land tenure system is weak and forced evictions are common;
- S. whereas the host community of the wider Dadaab region has displayed great humanity, generosity and tolerance given the presence of the camp, but faces enormous economic, development and environmental challenges;
- T. whereas the protracted nature of the situation in Dadaab and the closure programme has meant that donors have shifted their attention to other conflicts and reduced their

spending, meaning refugees in the camp face a number of challenges, including dwindling food rations and limited access to medical supplies, as well as challenges in education and skills training, particularly for young people;

- U. whereas climate change in particular is having a devastating effect on the pastoralist, nomadic lifestyle, which accounts for the livelihoods of a large number of people in the region, who are also facing growing threats brought about by drought, disease, war and dwindling livestock, among other problems; whereas this state of affairs necessitates that special attention be devoted to the pastoral community in any regional asylum solution;
- V. whereas the countries of the region are currently having to contend with the worst drought of the last 60 years, which has caused a food crisis in Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Yemen which could lead to widespread famine;
- W. whereas the EU has allocated EUR 286 million through the European Development Fund (EDF) for the period 2014-2020, focusing on the implementation of the 'Compact' and on state and peace building, food security, resilience and education in particular; whereas the EU Emergency Trust Fund (EUTF) for Africa was signed at the Valletta Summit on 12 November 2015 and was designed to address the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration by promoting resilience, economic opportunities, equal opportunities, security and development; whereas the EU is responding to the lifesaving basic needs of refugees hosted in Kenyan refugee camps; whereas the EU is also committed to supporting the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) through the African Peace Facility, through the provision of significant funding to provide security and to reduce the threat posed by Al Shabaab and other armed opposition groups;
- X. whereas following the Executive Order of US President Trump of 27 January 2017, approximately 3 000 refugees, who were due to be resettled in the US from Kenya in 2017, the majority from Dadaab, and with most having already been rigorously screened by US and UN officials and having waited for up to 10 years for their resettlement to be approved, face uncertain futures;
- Y. whereas EU resettlement efforts are limited, especially in comparison to non-EU countries such as Australia or Canada, and are far from what the UNHCR considers to be necessary in order to ensure a fair distribution of refugees worldwide;
- Z. whereas the Nairobi global action plan adopted during the IGAD summit on 25 March 2017 highlighted drought and armed conflict in particular as the reasons for the displacement of people in the region;
- AA. whereas following the deployment of an EU election evaluation mission to Kenya, it was recommended that an EU election observation mission for the general election in August 2017 would be useful and effective;
- 1. Commends Kenya and the local region of Dadaab for the role it has played in hosting an unprecedented number of refugees over such a long period; underlines the fact, however, that the current situation in the region is unsustainable and requires an efficient, coordinated response by governments of the region and the international

community as a whole, including the EU, in order to bring about a sustainable solution to the Somali refugee question, alongside efforts to increase security and establish long-term socio-economic development in the region;

2. Takes note of the IGAD Nairobi declaration on durable solutions for Somali refugees and the reintegration of returnees in Somalia; welcomes the commitment to achieve a comprehensive regional approach, while also maintaining protection and promoting self-reliance in the countries of asylum, which is to be undertaken with the support of the international community and consistent with international responsibility-sharing as outlined in the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF) of the New York Declaration;
3. Regrets the very low-key role played by the EU Member States when it comes to efforts to resettle refugees from Dadaab and calls on the EU to live up to its responsibility in ensuring fair burden-sharing;
4. Points out that as long as instability continues in the wider region and with a renewed risk of famine, refugees will no longer be able to return home, meaning the EU will, regrettably, have to keep focusing resources on immediate humanitarian efforts in the region, rather than fully addressing long-term development; calls for the EU, therefore, to re-double its efforts to engage and play a mediating role in the region in order to solve the underlying economic, political, environmental and security problems, which are the root causes of extreme poverty, criminal activity, radicalisation and terrorism and are ultimately causing the refugee situation;
5. Underlines the fact that ultimately a regional response will be required to provide continued protection to 260 000 Somali refugees; recalls that the sustainable reintegration of returnees requires a holistic, community-based approach in order to improve absorption capacity and deliver better access to services for returnees, internally displaced persons and local communities in Somalia;
6. Welcomes the adoption of the Nairobi global and regional action plan, which provides for a progressive closure of the camps to allow refugees to access employment and services in their host country and to be able to move freely; regrets, however, the absence of concrete action on Dadaab; supports the creation of a regional fund for donors;
7. Considers that given the current circumstances of ongoing security problems in Somalia and a high risk of famine, in any scenario, returns should always be voluntary; calls for a greater sharing of responsibilities when it comes to hosting refugees and establishing additional methods to help refugees to access third countries, including the EU;
8. Reiterates its support for the aims of the EUTF for Africa in addressing the root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in the East Africa region; demands that the Member States honour their commitments to the fund; calls for the Commission, however, to step up consultation efforts with actors in the region, including the local populations, regional government and NGOs, with a view to focusing on locally identified problems and needs and fostering a conducive climate and increasing the capacity for the return of refugees to their home countries; underlines the fact that Dadaab has created around 10 000 jobs, which are mainly linked to humanitarian

activities;

9. Underlines the importance of a people- and community-centred approach to effectuating EUTF resources for the purposes of assisting with Dadaab returns and establishing development and resilience measures in the region; strongly believes that the EUTF should focus not only on economic development but also on grassroots projects in the region, aimed specifically at improving the quality, equity and universal accessibility of basic services and training for the development of local competences, as well as at responding to the needs of vulnerable communities, including minorities;
10. Believes that the EUTF should place greater focus on boosting sustainable development in the region, by strengthening economic and employment opportunities and by strengthening resilience; calls for these funds to be put to use in fostering sustainable development and for further expansion of the use of solar power as a source of energy, for example for pumping fresh water, which has proved a successful project in some parts of the Dadaab camp;
11. Commends the Somali authorities for progress made in recent months, including with the organisation of elections; underlines the fact, however, that security and socio-economic conditions in many parts of Somalia remain extremely challenging for large-scale returns; calls for the EU and its Member States, therefore, to work alongside the Somali authorities to step up efforts to bring stability to the country before conducting large scale repatriations;
12. Calls for the EU and international partners to fulfil commitments to Somalia, namely by undertaking efforts to establish food security, in order to avoid the impending famine, to foster security and the reconciliation of communal grievances, to improve the management of public finances and to assist with the completion of the constitutional review, in order to achieve long-term stability;
13. Calls for the EU to ensure that relocation programmes in the region take particular care that vulnerable groups of people are relocated to safe regions in a responsible manner, and that the rights of the refugees are upheld; calls for the EU and international partners to assist in building up infrastructures across the country so that returning refugees can be re-integrated safely and permanently into Somali society, free from threats by terrorist elements such as Al Shabaab;
14. Underlines the need to better manage the borders between Somalia and its neighbouring countries, which are considered a playing field for networks engaged in the trafficking and smuggling of people, arms, drugs and other illicit goods, hence providing financing for criminal and terrorist activities; expects the EU Training Mission to Somalia to work closely with AMISOM and the Somali authorities to share best practice on improved border management in order to apprehend traffickers and smugglers;
15. Recognises that there can be no development without improved security in the region; strongly underlines the fact, however, that funds from EDF and ODA sources must be devoted to economic, human and social development in the region with a particular focus on the development challenges identified by the Trust Fund decision; condemns any use of EDF and ODA funds for the purposes of migration management and control of any other actions without development objectives;

16. Points out the need to strengthen the resilience and boost the development of the impacted host communities in the Dadaab region of Kenya, paying attention that livelihoods are not negatively affected by the gradual reduction of Dadaab and public services provided in the town, and the economic shock that this may cause to the population; underlines the fact that the population hosted in Dadaab has put great environmental strain on the region, affecting the local population's access to natural resources; underlines the fact that this issue should be jointly addressed by the Kenyan Government and through the EU National Indicative Programme for Kenya. expects the Kenyan Government and the EU to recognise the specific needs of this fragile region;
17. Notes with great concern the serious effects of climate change on the region, which serve as a stark reminder to the EU, its Member States and the international community as a whole of the need to implement the terms of the Paris Agreement, while noting the direct effect such actions have on war and famine in the region;
18. Instructs its president to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government of Kenya, the Governor of the Garissa region, the speaker of the Kenyan Parliament, the Government of Somalia, the speaker of the Somali parliament, IGAD, the governments of the IGAD Member States, the UN Secretary-General and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.