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*Plenary sitting*

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**B8-0334/2017**

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))

**Mariya Gabriel, Frank Engel, Bogdan Brunon Wenta, Cristian Dan Preda, Michael Gahler, Pavel Svoboda, Paul Rübig, Krzysztof Hetman, Adam Szejnfeld, Agustín Díaz de Mera García Consuegra, György Hölvényi, Maurice Ponga, Željana Zovko**  
on behalf of the PPE 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 decision by the High Court of Kenya of 9 February 2017 ruling against the closure of Dadaab refugee camp,
  - having regard to the decision of the Kenyan Government to appeal the High Court decision of 9 February 2017,
  - 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 for Somalia and the Regional Indicative programme for Eastern 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 one of the biggest in the world; whereas the region faces challenges of irregular migration, forced and internal 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 good governance and socio-economic opportunities, extreme 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 18 years old;
- E. whereas in May 2016 Kenya disbanded its department for refugee affairs, which was responsible for registration, meaning that tens of thousands of people have not been registered, which could in fact increase these numbers further;
- 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 Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Yemen, which could lead to widespread famine;
- J. 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 camp would be delayed by six

months until May 2017 on ‘humanitarian grounds’, at the request of the international community;

- K. 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 have to be conducted in line with international standards, in that they must be voluntary, informed, objective and neutral, 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;
- L. whereas, however, 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 Dadaab refugee camp were discriminatory and amounted to a collective punishment, as well as being excessive, arbitrary and disproportionate;
- M. 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 carrying out voluntary returns of Somalis into stable areas of Somalia, an issue that has been openly criticised by the Kenyan Government and other stakeholders;
- N. whereas since the UNHCR started supporting voluntary returns of Somali refugees in 2014, approximately 55,652 have returned, but the aim to increase the rate of sustainable returns will depend on the situation in Somalia;
- O. 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;
- P. 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 to address them;
- Q. 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;
- R. 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 Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF) was signed at the Valetta summit on 12 November 2015 and was designed to address the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration by promoting good governance, resilience, economic opportunities, security and development;
- S. 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;

- T. 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;
- U. 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;
1. Recognizes the commendable efforts undertaken by Kenya and the local region of Dadaab in hosting an unprecedented number of refugees for such a long period;
  2. Stresses however that the current situation in the region has become unsustainable and requires an efficient, coordinated response by neighbouring governments, regional governmental organisations, such as the African Union, and the international community at large, including the EU, to ensure that a sustainable, safe programme of returns is put in place, alongside efforts to increase security and establish long-term socio-economic development in the region;
  3. Points out that as long as instability continues in the wider region, refugees will no longer be able to return home; calls for the EU, therefore, to increase 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;
  4. Insists that a regional response is essential 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;
  5. 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;
  6. Recalls that voluntary returns is not the only option; calls for a greater sharing of responsibilities with regard to returning refugees and establishing additional methods for refugees to access third countries;
  7. 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 focussing on locally identified problems and needs to facilitate 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;

8. Underlines the importance of a people- and community-centred approach to making EUTF resources assist with Dadaab returns and establishing development and resilience measures in the region; believes that the EUTF should focus not only on economic, human and social development, but also on grassroots projects specifically aimed at improving the quality and accessibility of basic services and training for the development of local competences;
9. Points out that women and children make up over 60 % of the total population of the refugee camp and are perceived as the most vulnerable and marginalised groups within the camp; calls on the Kenyan Government, the regional institutions, the international aid organisations and the international community, including the EU, to adopt a specific approach to assistance measures that addresses the factors influencing the vulnerability of women and children in the camp, such as persecution based on sex and gender, violence against women, sexual abuse and exploitation, extreme poverty and exclusion;
10. Welcomes the successful organisation of the 2017 presidential election; underlines, however, that security and socio-economic conditions in many parts of Somalia are still not conducive to large-scale returns, and therefore calls for the EU and its Member States to work alongside the Somali authorities on restoring stability to the country;
11. Calls for the EU and international partners to step up their efforts to ensure food security in Somalia and to avoid the impending famine;
12. 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, in order to avoid the danger of them being preyed upon by radical and terrorist elements such as Al Shabaab;
13. 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 to 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;
14. Calls on the African Union and the sub-regional African organisations to seriously consider the regional dimension and prevent any further destabilisation of the region, in particular by maintaining a permanent political dialogue between countries of the region; calls for the European Union to collaborate at the highest level with its regional African partners in this sense;
15. Recalls that security and stabilisation remain major challenges in the region and insists on the need for the African Union to closely monitor the situation and maintain a permanent political dialogue with the Kenyan Government authorities;
16. Worries about the impact on the situation in the region of the decision taken by the United States administration to cut its contribution to the UN agencies by USD 640

million; insists that the EU's voluntary contributions to the UN's funds and agencies, which amount to half of their total budget, are crucial for maintaining global peace and security;

17. Stresses that a shortfall in the budget of UN agencies such as UNHCR, who provide protection, shelter and humanitarian assistance under difficult and complex circumstances, would only contribute to increasing the security challenges caused by chronic overcrowding, risk of disease, seasonal floods, and risk of famine;
18. Underlines the fact that the EU is committed, through its external action policy and its security strategy, to humanitarian aid, economic development, strong state institutions, good healthcare, education and democracy in the region;
19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the Vice-President of the European Commission / High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs.