



13.3.2012

B7-0169/2012

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 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Human trafficking in Sinai, in particular the case of Solomon W.

Marietje Schaake, Ramon Tremosa i Balcells, Louis Michel, Charles Goerens, Robert Rochefort, Graham Watson, Marielle de Sarnez, Sarah Ludford, Leonidas Donskis, Niccolò Rinaldi, Kristiina Ojuland, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Sonia Alfano

on behalf of the ALDE Group

European Parliament resolution on Human trafficking in Sinai, in particular the case of Solomon W.

The European Parliament,

- Having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially Article 3,
- Having regard to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the status of Refugees,
- Having regard to Article 3 of the European Convention on Human rights of 1950,
- Having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, particularly Articles 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 thereof,
- Having regard to Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings 2005,
- Having regard to the Partnership for democracy and prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean,
- Having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. Whereas thousands of African refugees, in particular from Sudan and Eritrea, have disappeared or are being held captive, mainly while crossing the Egyptian – Israeli border, by Bedouin human traffickers in the Egyptian Sinai; whereas the refugees held captive are subject to horrific acts of torture, degrading treatment and inhuman detention conditions, regularly leading to death; whereas the refugees are forced to pay large amounts of money for their release;

B. Whereas according to human rights organizations those who fail to pay the price for their release are killed and have their organs removed and traded; whereas there are reports of mass graves of killed refugees;

C. Whereas in December 2011 several individuals were kidnapped outside a UN refugee camp in Sudan by human traffickers of the Rashaida tribe; whereas 27 of them, including four girls and a woman with a small child, were Eritrean, and were brought to Rafah in the Sinai Mahadya, Egypt;

D. Whereas in particular women were battered and mistreated by the kidnappers and some of the captives were killed and their bodies were thrown into the desert; whereas a 25 year old Eritrean man named Solomon has escaped;

E. Whereas the life of Solomon is in danger, as the human traffickers are in close pursuit of him and have put a price of USD 50.000 on his head; whereas for the moment, Solomon is protected by the Salafist Bedouins of the Sheikh Mohamed;

F. Whereas the Egyptian authorities currently do not allow officials of the office of the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to leave Cairo and to visit Sinai;

G. Whereas the Egyptian authorities face difficulties in patrolling and guarding the Sinai due to limitations to border policing as laid down in the 1978 Israel-Egypt peace agreement; whereas the Israeli government has regularly accepted several exceptions to this agreement to improve security;

H. Whereas Egypt, according to the 2010 US State Department Trafficking in Person Report, is a source, transit and destination country for women and children who are subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically for forced labour and forced prostitution;

I. Whereas a network smuggling sub-Saharan migrants through Egypt to Israel has been operational in the Sinai region since at least 2007;

J. Whereas the EU has repeatedly invited Egypt to develop and improve the quality of the assistance and protection offered to asylum seekers and refugees residing or transiting on their territory;

K. Whereas the EU has also pressed the Egyptian authorities to ensure that the principle of non-refoulement is observed for all migrants in need of international protection while UNHCR is given full possibility to implement its mandate on the entire territory of Egypt;

1. Urges the Egyptian authorities to rapidly intervene in order to provide effective protection and secure the life of Solomon, and of all those refugees currently being detained, tortured and mistreated in Egyptian Sinai; calls on the Egyptian and Israeli authorities to cooperate in restoring security in Sinai and ending the humanitarian catastrophe for many sub-Saharan refugees;

2. Urges the Egyptian authorities to allow officials of the office of the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees to go out from Cairo in order to protect the life of Solomon and of all refugees who are kept prisoners;

3. Urges the Egyptian authorities to credibly and effectively investigate all cases of murder, torture and rape of refugees being held captive by human traffickers in Egyptian Sinai and to ensure prosecution and accountability of those responsible;

4. Calls on the Egyptian authorities to undertake measures such as research, information and mass (online) media campaigns and social and economic initiatives to prevent and combat human trafficking; calls on the Israeli authorities to apprehend suspects in Israel who are cooperating with the human traffickers in Sinai;

5. Encourages Egypt, Israel and the international community to end official inaction and to step up the fight against human smuggling and trafficking in Sinai;

7. Stresses that Egypt has an international legal responsibility to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms and to urgently also bring its treatment of refugees into line with specific international legal norms and standards so that every refugee is afforded full

protection and assistance;

8. Calls on the Egyptian authorities to implement the 2010 anti-trafficking law to increase substantially law enforcement activity against all forms of trafficking;

9. Calls on the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to put this topic with high priority on the agenda of political dialogue with Egypt and Israel;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the High Representative/ Vice-President, the Council and the Commission, to the Governments and the Parliaments of the Member States, to the Egyptian Government, to the UN Secretary General and the UN Human Rights Council.