



Plenary sitting

B8-0530/2017

12.9.2017

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Myanmar including the situation of Rohingyas
(2017/2838(RSP))

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

European Parliament resolution on Myanmar including the situation of Rohingyas (2017/2838(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Myanmar and on the situation of Rohingya Muslims, in particular that of 15 December 2016,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on the EU strategy with Myanmar/Burma of 20 June 2016,
 - having regard to the Statement by the Spokesperson of the VP/HR on the recent escalation of violence in Myanmar of 2 December 2016 and the Statement by the VP/HR on the situation in Rakhine State, Myanmar of 6 September 2017,
 - having regard to the joint press release on the third EU-Myanmar Human Rights Dialogue of 25 November 2016,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on Statelessness of 4 December 2015,
 - having regard to the recent briefings of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar of 29 and 18 November 2016 respectively, on the deteriorating human rights situation in northern Rakhine State,
 - having regard to the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled ‘Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar’, of 20 June 2016,
 - having regard to the Final Report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State: Towards a Peaceful and Prosperous Future For the People of Rakhine
- A. Whereas under the current Constitution of Myanmar the military retains autonomy from civilian oversight and extensive power over the government and national security;
- B. Whereas discrimination against the Rohingya has been endemic for decades;
- C. Whereas the situation in the Rakhine state is rapidly deteriorating with an increasing amount of violence against the Rohingya and a growing amount of refugees trying to escape this violence; whereas the situation is generally considered to be on the brink of a genocide against the Rohingya;
- D. Whereas the VP/HR has condemned the attacks on 25 August on Myanmar security forces in Northern Rakhine State and the subsequent violence;

- E. Whereas the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in Myanmar has called on all parties to refrain from violence, to protect civilians, to restore law and order and to resolve issues through dialogue and peaceful means ;
- F. whereas UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, in his report of 20 June 2016, described the continued serious rights violations against the Rohingya, including arbitrary deprivation of nationality, rendering them stateless, severe restrictions of freedom of movement, threats to life and security, denial of the rights to health and education, forced labour, sexual violence and limitations on their political rights, 'which may amount to crimes against humanity';
- G. whereas Mr Al Hussein indicated that Rohingya are excluded from numerous professions and need special paperwork to access hospitals, which has resulted in delays and in the deaths of babies and their mothers during childbirth;
- H. whereas John McKissick, the head of the UN refugee agency's office in the Bangladeshi town of Cox's Bazar has recently gone on record as stating that Myanmar is attempting to 'ethnically cleanse the Muslim Rohingya minority from its territory'; whereas the human rights violations against the Rohingya minority amount to collective punishment;
- I. whereas these concerns have been echoed by the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State chaired by Kofi Annan in August 2017;
- J. whereas rape is reportedly widely used in Myanmar by the armed forces as a weapon of war to intimidate ethnic minorities, with devastating consequences for the victims; whereas the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict; whereas any form of sexual violence is on the list of war crimes and acts that constitute crimes against humanity; whereas it should be stressed in particular that Rohingya women are victims of multiple forms of discrimination, including sexual abuse and forced sterilisation;
- K. whereas in the past two weeks, an estimated 270,000 Rohingya have fled into neighbouring Bangladesh to escape the violence, according to UNHCR;
- L. Whereas Bangladesh has played a key humanitarian role welcoming the refugees fleeing the violence ;
- M. Whereas the Rohingya are almost entirely deprived of freedom of movement and face limitations due to a patchwork of government restrictions, ad hoc decisions by local officials and exorbitant travel costs due to corrupt practices by government officials;
- N. Whereas landmines have been placed on the border between Myanmar and Bangladesh obstructing people from crossing this border; whereas the authorities of Bangladesh have summoned the Myanmar ambassador in Dhaka to protest against the planting of landmines along the border of the two countries; whereas a senior

official in Bangladesh has stated that the landmines have been planted to stop the Rohingya from returning to their villages;

- O. Whereas in September 2017 a boat with about 35 Rohingya capsized in the middle of the night, while the people on board were trying to escape Myanmar by boat; whereas at least five people have drowned in the Bay of Bengal according to police in Bangladesh;
- P. Whereas Nobel price and Sakharov prize laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi, incumbent Minister of Foreign Affairs, [State Counsellor](#) and Leader of the National League for Democracy of Myanmar, has been criticized worldwide for her role in the conflict;
- Q. Whereas Aung San Suu Kyi stated that all people of the Rakhine State are being defended; whereas Aung San Suu Kyi has recently referred to the Rohingya community as "terrorists" and has stated that the accusations of violence against Rohingya is being distorted by a "huge iceberg of misinformation";
- R. Whereas since October 2016 media access to the areas off conflict in northern Rakhine State has been highly restricted; whereas the flow of information from the Rakhine region is limited due to the restrictions on media to over the conflict;
- S. Whereas burnings of homes have taken place at 17 separate sites across northern Rakhine State between August 25 and 30, 2017; whereas there are a total of 700 destroyed buildings in Chein Khar Li.
- T. Whereas the international staff members of the UN and INGO's are prohibited from entering the areas affected by the conflict and aid organizations are unable to provide their usual range of services and assistance; whereas HR/VR Federica Mogherini has expressed her concern with the extremely serious situation in the Rakhine State;
- U. Whereas these travel restrictions on humanitarian organisations have led to a critical food insecurity and malnutrition, afflicting 80.000 children.
- V. Whereas countries have an obligation to respect the non refoulement principle;
- W. Whereas since 19 July 2013 Myanmar benefits again from the 'Everything But Arms' preferential trade regime, applied retroactively as of 13 June 2012, the day when the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conference first recognised progress in the labour rights situation in Myanmar;
- X. Whereas the EU and Myanmar launched negotiations for an investment protection agreement in 2013
- 1. Urges the military and security forces under Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, to stop immediately the killings, harassment and rapes of the Rohingya people, and the burning of their homes; urges the Myanmar government under the leadership of

State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi to avoid inflammatory rhetoric, take measures to de-escalate tensions, and move toward implementing policies aimed at securing civilians lives and long-term peace and prosperity for the area;

2. Echoes, furthermore, the calls in the Council conclusions for the building of effective democratic institutions and a strong civil society, the respect for basic rights and freedoms, and the promotion of good governance;
3. Urges the Government of Myanmar to respect the freedom of movement of the Rohingya and guarantee their safety wherever they are; Calls upon the government of Myanmar to immediately remove all mines on the border with Bangladesh; Urges the Government of Myanmar to immediately lift the travel restrictions on humanitarian organisations, to permit aid workers to assist endangered people and to ensure the protection of unarmed civilians;
4. Calls upon the government of Myanmar to allow full access for domestic and international media and international observers to all areas affected by the recent violence; Emphasises that only through full media access and full transparency the flow of information will be encouraged to determine what is exactly taking place in the region;
5. Reminds 1990 Sakharov Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi that the Prize is awarded to those that defend the human rights, safeguard the rights of minorities and respect international law among other criteria; calls on the EP to analyse if these criteria are duly fulfilled;
6. Calls on the European External Action Service to continue the regular bilateral human rights dialogue and to discuss the situation regarding problematic legislation and discrimination of minorities, in particular the Rohingya, in detail and to report back to the European Parliament regarding the outcome of these discussions;
7. Urges the EEAS and Commission to communicate to the government of Myanmar that if it does not make significant improvements to fundamental freedoms, especially with regards to minority rights, the Commission will suspend the preferences Myanmar enjoys under the Everything But Arms program and that further negotiations on an EU-Myanmar investment treaty may also be suspended;
8. Calls for the EU and its Member States to continue their support of the new democratic structures of Myanmar and to focus in particular on technical cooperation to help improve the various state functions;
9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Government and Parliament of Myanmar, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States, the Secretary General of ASEAN, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Human Rights Council.