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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 Pasqualina Napoletano, Elena Valenciano Martínez-Orozco, Paulo Casaca, Inger Segelström,

on behalf of the PSE Group

on the humanitarian situation of refugees from Iraq

European Parliament resolution on the humanitarian situation of refugees from Iraq

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the right of refugees to international protection,
 - having regard to the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention) and to the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees,
 - having regard to the UNHCR's Return Advisory and Position on International Protection Needs of Iraqis outside Iraq, dated 18 December 2006,
 - having regard to Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004, on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third-country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted ("Qualification Directive"),
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas violence in Iraq is driving hundreds of thousands of people running away within the country and abroad in an upheaval not matched in the Middle East,
- B. whereas the United Nations estimates that 1.8 million people are displaced within Iraq and up to 2 million Iraqis have fled the country,
- C. whereas 50.000 people try to leave Iraq every month and whereas the neighbouring countries have restricted access for refugees to seek asylum forcing many to return to Iraq or be trapped in a kind of no-man's land,
- D. whereas the refugees receive humanitarian assistance from UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) but conditions for refugees and other displaced Iraqis are increasingly dire, with limited supplies of water, food, fuel and medicines and whereas humanitarian organisations are appealing for adequate funding to respond the increased needs inside Iraq and in its neighbouring countries,
- E. whereas countries hosting Iraqi people are restricting entry, as well as imposing restrictive stay requirements, such as reducing the temporary protection regime (TPR) and/or making the renewal of their visas so difficult that most Iraqis quickly lose their legal status,
- F. whereas the response of the major European powers in order to accept Iraqi refugees has, with the exception of Sweden, been equally restrictive,
- G. whereas, under customary international law, there is a legal obligation not to return

refugees to persecution or serious harm and to allow asylum seekers fleeing widespread human rights abuses and generalized violence to enter the relevant country, at least temporarily, to be screened for refugee status,

- H. whereas Egypt, although not a border country, has been hosting a considerable number of refugees,
1. Urges Iraq's bordering countries to abide by their legal duty to admit immediately refugees, particularly those stranded in no-man's land or at their borders and belonging to especially targeted minorities such as stateless Palestinians or Christians;
 2. Demande à la Commission et au Conseil d'encourager les Etats de la région à adopter des mesures d'accueil provisoire des réfugiés et à les soutenir dans leurs efforts, y compris financièrement;
 3. Asks the Commission and the Member States to support the UNHCR's protection efforts focused at providing minimum protection from detention and 'refoulement' and non-penalisation for illegal entry and access to education, adequate housing, basic health care facilities and other basic services;
 4. Welcomes the international conference scheduled for 17 April 2007 on addressing the humanitarian needs of refugees and internally displaced persons inside Iraq and in neighbouring countries;
 5. Asks the EU Member States and the international community, as a demonstration of international burden-sharing, to contribute to the resettlement of Iraqi refugees and stateless persons from Iraq and Palestinians refugees from Iraq stranded in Jordan and Syria;
 6. Recognises the efforts deployed by the Swedish Government, which granted asylum to 8,951 Iraqis in 2006, and invites other Member States to take this country as the example to be followed;
 7. Also recognises the effort of non-border countries of the region such as Egypt towards Iraqi refugees; asks this country to maintain its assistance for the Iraqi refugees, keeping its border open and improving conditions for them;
 8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the governments of Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Turkey.