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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Yemen

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on behalf of the ECR Group

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Yemen

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Council Conclusions of 27 October 2009 on Yemen,
 - having regard to the declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union of 27 October 2009 on the deteriorating security situation in Yemen,
 - having regard to the European Community Strategy Paper for Yemen for the period 2007-2013,
 - having regard to the statement by Tobias Pflüger, acting chair of its Delegation for relations with the Gulf States, including Yemen, issued after the visit by the delegation Bureau to Yemen from 22 to 25 February 2009,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the Nigerian terrorist who tried to blow up an aeroplane over Detroit on 25 December 2009, was trained at a Yemeni al-Qa'ida camp,
- B. whereas the continuing breakdown of security in Yemen offers terrorist and insurgent groups in the region, particularly al-Qa'ida, a safe haven in which to plan, organise and support subsequent terrorist operations,
- C. whereas terrorism had been rife in Yemen for many years before 9/11, as exemplified by the 12 October 2000 attack on the USS Cole by al-Qa'ida, and whereas since 2007 terrorism in Yemen has intensified, with more than 30 attacks on pipelines, oil facilities, government buildings, embassies (including those of Italy and the USA), ships and tourists,
- D. whereas the security situation is being worsened further by the insurgency involving Zaidi Shi'i revivalists in Sa'dah in the north of Yemen and the outbreak of violence by the secessionist movement in the south of the country,
- E. whereas the local fighting in the Sa'dah region took on a regional dimension when Saudi military forces were forced to engage rebels on the Saudi-Yemen border and launched at least two raids on the rebel positions,
- F. whereas the 2008 food crisis has had a huge impact on the poorer sections of the Yemeni population, whilst the global financial crisis, particularly the fall in oil revenue, has contributed to unsustainable pressure on public finances, further aggravated by the limited implementation of overdue economic and fiscal reforms,
- G. whereas Yemen's oil reserves, the source of over 75% of its income, are close to depletion, and whereas the country has few viable options for a sustainable post-oil

economy,

- H. whereas another serious problem facing Yemen is the severe water shortage, which is caused by several factors, including rising domestic consumption, poor water management, corruption, a lack of resource management and wasteful irrigation techniques; whereas according to the government's estimates 99% of all water extraction is unlicensed,
- I. whereas the situation caused by Yemen's lack of food and water is further complicated by the population's dependence on qat, a quick-cash crop which requires heavy irrigation to thrive and which is cultivated so extensively that Yemen has become a net food importer,
- J. whereas Yemen is the poorest country in the Arab world, with an annual per capita income of less than €650, nearly half the population earning less than €2 per day, and an unemployment rate of 35%, and at the same time has one of the world's highest population growth rates, which creates additional economic, educational and social problems,
- K. whereas the increase in piracy in the Gulf of Aden and continuous migratory pressure from the Horn of Africa are further factors impacting on the stability of the country,
- L. whereas the 18-mile wide strait of Bab el Mandeb between Yemen and Djibouti is of significant strategic importance, with 3.3 million barrels of oil (4% of global daily production) passing through it every day,
- M. whereas since 2004 the EU has donated aid worth more than €144 million to Yemen, with the largest share going towards economic development, and has implemented bilateral assistance programmes to support the Yemeni police and coastguard,
- N. whereas following the failed Detroit airline bombing the British and American governments are to substantially increase their military and humanitarian aid to Yemen and have also undertaken jointly to finance a dedicated Yemeni anti-terror police unit and support the Yemeni coastguard,
- O. whereas the Yemeni education system remains poorly developed, as reflected in a national illiteracy rate of about 50%, a female illiteracy rate of nearly 70%, and an inadequate number of qualified teachers,
- P. whereas governance reforms have been recognised as a priority by the Yemeni Government in the National Reform Agenda,
- Q. whereas the parliamentary elections which were to be held in April 2009 have been postponed in order to enable the authorities to implement the essential reforms of the electoral system; whereas no concrete steps towards this goal have been taken so far,
- R. whereas serious concerns remain about developments in Yemen with regard to democracy, human rights and the independence of the judiciary, especially unfair trials before the country's notorious Specialised Criminal Court and the use of torture; whereas there have been cases involving persecution of journalists; whereas the situation of women is especially difficult, characterised by forced marriages and unequal treatment by

law of men and women,

- S. whereas six European citizens - five Germans and one Briton - are still being held hostage following their kidnapping in June 2009, whilst three other people from that group were found dead immediately after their abduction; whereas some local tribal leaders have pointed at al-Qa'ida as being responsible for the kidnappings,
1. Expresses its concern at the longstanding presence of al-Qa'ida in Yemen, terrorist links to EU Member States, and the failure of the Yemeni authorities to take effective action, and emphasises that this could lead to a further erosion of central government authority and destabilisation of the region to the degree seen in Somalia or Afghanistan, which will in turn provide opportunities for extremists directed or inspired by al-Qa'ida to regroup, organise, train, and launch jihadi terrorist operations throughout the world from Yemeni territory;
 2. Calls on Member States to contribute to efforts to bolster Yemen's counter-terrorism capabilities, especially in relation to the creation of a new, dedicated Yemeni anti-terror police unit;
 3. Reminds all parties to the conflicts of their obligation to respect human rights and international humanitarian law; calls on the parties to allow civilians wishing to escape from the conflicts to reach places of safety, to facilitate access for the UN and NGOs to areas where internally-displaced people have gathered and to allow emergency medical and humanitarian relief to reach those internally displaced as a matter of urgency;
 4. Reaffirms its support for a unified, stable, secure and democratic Yemen and, accordingly, calls on Member States to increase the financial and technical assistance they provide to the Yemeni Government;
 5. Calls on the Yemeni authorities to implement overdue institutional, economic and fiscal reforms, namely strengthening the roles and capabilities of democratically-elected institutions at central and local level, strengthening state institutions, improving the business environment, fostering Yemen's integration into the global and regional economy, expanding social service provision, bolstering employment and education opportunities, addressing corruption, inflation and unemployment and curbing government subsidies;
 6. Calls on the Yemeni authorities to introduce the reforms needed to improve the human rights situation in the country, particularly by ensuring media freedom, the right to a fair trial, equal treatment for men and women and the abolition of forced marriages; welcomes, in this regard, a recent law which fixes the minimum age for marriage at 17;
 7. Emphasises the importance of holding elections in 2011 and encourages all political parties to implement their agreements setting out the measures required to improve the electoral system and deepen democracy, in particular taking into account the recommendations made by the EU Election Observation Mission following the democratic 2006 presidential and local elections; calls on the Commission and the Council to monitor the process of constitutional and electoral law reform which has led to the postponement of the parliamentary elections;

8. Welcomes the steps already taken by the authorities to combat corruption, namely the establishment of a Central Organisation for Control and Auditing and a Supreme National Authority for Combating Corruption;
9. Calls on the Gulf States to hold out the prospect of membership of the Gulf Cooperation Council for Yemen in exchange for the necessary reforms, including progress on curbing government subsidies, addressing corruption and enacting measures to deal with security concerns; in this regard, calls on the Commission and the Council to encourage the Gulf Cooperation Council to become a mediator capable of bringing the various Yemeni parties to the negotiating table and initiating a comprehensive political dialogue;
10. Encourages the Yemeni authorities to play an active role in international security strategies, such as Operation Atalanta and Operation Allied Protector;
11. Calls on the Commission and the Council to ensure that the aid supplied by the international community, and in particular from the European Union budget, is used to finance projects which directly benefit as many people as possible and whose effectiveness can be evaluated on the spot;
12. Calls for the necessary steps to be taken to ensure that international financial assistance is properly controlled and efficiently managed;
13. Calls on the Yemeni authorities to strengthen coastguard and border-guard units and introduce improved police training and programmes to professionalise the prison service in order to improve the security situation of the country and its ability to combat terrorism;
14. Calls on the Commission and the Council to implement a special programme of assistance to Yemen, including out-of-country training for Yemeni civil servants (as conducted by EUJUST LEX in Iraq) and the placement of trainers in key ministries (as undertaken by the EU in Bosnia-Herzegovina), in a way that reinforces or is complementary to other international efforts;
15. Calls on the Yemeni authorities to step up their efforts to ensure the release of the six European hostages being held on their territory;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of Yemen and the Gulf Cooperation Council.