



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Plenary sitting

4.4.2011

B7-0260/2011

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

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

on the situation in Ivory Coast

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on behalf of the PPE Group

B7-0260/2011

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Ivory Coast

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Ivory Coast, in particular, that of 16 December 2010,
 - having regard to the relevant UN Security Council resolutions on Ivory Coast, particularly, Resolution 1946 and 1951 (2010), Resolutions 1967, 1968 and 1975 (2011),
 - having regard to the statements of the HR/VP Baroness Catherine Ashton on the situation in Ivory Coast, and in particular, those of 3, 10, 12 and 19 March 2011,
 - having regard to the Conclusions on Ivory Coast adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council at its 3065th Meeting, on 31st January 2011,
 - having regard to the EU Council Decision 2011/18/CFSP and to the EU Council Regulation No 25/2011 of 14 January 2011 imposing assets freeze and designating additional persons and entities subjected to restrictive measures in Ivory Coast,
 - having regard to the Decision adopted at Addis Ababa on 10 March 2011 by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union,
 - having regard to the UN Security Council Statements on Ivory Coast of 3 and 11 March 2011,
 - having regard to the Joint Statement by the Co-Presidents of the ACP–EU Parliamentary Assembly issued on 18 March 2011 condemning violence and human rights violation in Ivory Coast,
 - having regard to the Statement made by its President Jerzy Buzek on 18 March 2011 calling for an end to all violence against civilians in Ivory Coast,
 - having regard to the Resolution on the situation in Ivory Coast adopted on 25 March 2011 in Abuja by the Authority of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS,
 - having regard to the United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution of 25 March 2011, establishing an international inquiry commission to investigate human rights violations in Ivory Coast since the presidential election,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas recent events in Northern Africa and the Middle East should not overshadow the dire situation in Ivory Coast; whereas, for the past four months, the country has been plunged in a deep political crisis stemming from the refusal of incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo to relinquish power to the legitimate President Alassane Ouattara, despite the fact that the latter has won the November 2010 presidential poll and was recognized as

such by the international community, following certification of the results by the United Nations,

- B. whereas since mid-February combats have intensified both in the capital and in the West of the country, with alarming reports indicating an increasing use of heavy artillery against civilians by forces loyal to Laurent Gbagbo; whereas in the last days, the Republican Forces of President Ouattara have launched a vast offensive aiming at reestablishing his authority, have taken control of several important areas, including the political capital Yamoussoukro and San Pedro - a key port for cocoa exports, and are now closing in on the economic capital Abidjan,
- C. whereas according to UN sources nearly 500 lives were lost in Ivory Coast since December 2010; whereas the number of casualties is likely to be much higher, as the violence taking place in the interior of the country is not always reported in the press,
- D. whereas the situation in Ivory Coast is at risk of relapsing into civil war and the situation poses therefore a serious threat to regional peace and stability,
- E. whereas on 3 March 2011, the forces of Laurent Gbagbo opened fire on an all-women demonstration in support of President Ouattara taking place in Abidjan, leaving 7 women dead and injuring many others,
- F. whereas UN High Commissioner Navi Pillay has indicated, following the brutal shelling of the Abobo market on 18 March 2011 by forces loyal to Mr. Gbagbo, that the attacks against civilians might constitute crimes against humanity,
- G. whereas the UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (ONUCI) has constantly been subject to threats and attacks by pro-Gbagbo security forces, while the ex-President has adopted an inflammatory rhetoric inciting to violence against the UN forces and foreigners present in Ivory Coast; whereas several UN peacekeepers were seriously injured or even taken hostage,
- H. whereas one prominent NGO report released mid-March denounced the atrocities committed by the security forces and militias loyal to Mr. Gbagbo, including cases of sexual violence, enforced disappearances and extra-judicial executions, excessive and indiscriminate use of force against civilians, as amounting to crimes against humanity,
- I. whereas Ms. Fatou Bensouda, Deputy Prosecutor of the ICC, has recently declared that the Court had sufficient information to open proceedings against Mr. Gbagbo, while underlying that the security situation posed serious challenges for the conduct of investigations and the protection of witnesses,
- J. whereas the rule of law has continued to deteriorate in Ivory Coast; whereas following the announcement of results, the broadcasting of all foreign information channels was suspended; whereas, more recently ONUCI FM, RFI and BBC have been barred from the country, while the publication of several newspapers close to President Ouattara has been disrupted,
- K. whereas the Ivoirian economic sector is critically deteriorating as Laurent Gbagbo has

proceeded to illegal nationalizations in the banking and cocoa sectors, as well as to arbitrary expropriations of money and private property; whereas the IMF has recently warned of the serious economic consequences of the situation in Ivory Coast for the whole region of West Africa,

- L. whereas the African Union has reaffirmed Alassane Outarra as legitimate winner of the presidential poll and has adopted the recommendations of the High Level Panel for an overall political solution to the post-electoral crisis in Ivory Coast,
 - M. whereas due to the climate of terror prevailing in the country an estimated 1 million people have been displaced, both internally and in neighbouring countries such as Liberia, Ghana, Togo, Mali and Guinea,
 - N. whereas on 17 March 2011 the European Commission has increased fivefold EU's humanitarian assistance to Ivory Coast ; whereas, however, the dire humanitarian situation on the ground requires the mobilization of additional funds, as access to food, medicine and basic commodities is increasingly difficult for many Ivoirians,
 - O. whereas the unanimously adopted UNSC Resolution 1975(2011) urges Mr. Gbagbo to immediately step aside and calls for an immediate end to violence against civilians, while imposing targeted financial and travel sanctions against Mr. Gbagbo, his wife and three associates,
 - P. whereas, according to the UN, the pro-Ouattara forces have been accused of massacres perpetrated in the West, notably in Duékoué, that have caused around 330 casualties,
1. Is deeply concerned by the worsening of the situation in Ivory Coast, four months after the second round of presidential elections and by the risk of relapse into civil war;
 2. Recalls that the sole source of democratic legitimacy is universal suffrage and that the election of Alassane Ouattara reflects the sovereign will of the Ivoirian people; urges all Ivorian institutions, including the Defence and Security forces of Côte d'Ivoire (FDSCI) to yield without delay to the authority of the democratically elected President Ouattara and his government;
 3. Condemns the attempts by ex-President Gbagbo and his supporters to violently usurp the will of the Ivorian people; reiterates its call on Mr. Gbagbo to step down and immediately hand over power to Alassane Ouattara; welcomes, in this respect, the adoption of Resolution 1975(2011), whereby the UN Security Council made his strongest statement since the beginning of the post-electoral crisis in Ivory Coast, calling on Mr. Gbagbo to immediately step aside;
 4. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the escalation of violence in Ivory Coast and deeply regrets the ensuing considerable loss of life, as well as the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law reportedly committed by the pro-Gbagbo forces against civilians, including acts of sexual violence; notes that according to the UNSC these acts may amount to crimes against humanity; stresses that violence against civilians, including women, children and internationally displaced persons, will not be tolerated and must cease immediately; expresses its firm opposition to any use of media as incitement to

hatred; calls for the lift of all restrictions placed on the exercise of the right to freedom of expression;

5. Is deeply concerned by the UN reports indicating the commission of massacres by pro-Ouattara forces in the West of the country, notably in Duékoué; reiterates its strong condemnation of any act of violence against civilians; calls for immediate, independent and transparent investigation into these acts and insists that those responsible must be held accountable for their crimes;
6. Insists that there can be no impunity and that no efforts should be spared in order to identify and bring to justice, including at international level, all those responsible for crimes against the civilian population; welcomes, in this respect, the creation of an inquiry commission by the UN Human Rights Council; notes that the UNSC has indicated that ICC may decide on its jurisdiction over the situation in Ivory Coast; calls on all actors in Ivory Coast to cooperate with these bodies so that justice can be done ;
7. Is deeply concerned by the worsening of humanitarian situation in Ivory Coast and neighboring countries, especially Liberia; calls on all actors in Ivory Coast to ensure safe and unhindered access to humanitarian organizations on the ground: calls for swift international political action to address the urgent humanitarian needs of the Ivoirians and avoid a new migration crisis in the region;
8. Firmly condemns the acts of intimidation and obstruction directed against ONUCI and calls, in this regard, on Mr. Gbagbo to immediately put an end to the incitement to hatred and all actions that threaten the safety of UN personnel on the ground;
9. Welcomes the additional targeted sanctions, comprising a visa ban and assets freeze, adopted by the EU Council against all persons and entities that oppose the legitimate President's authority, obstruct the handover of power and provide financial help to former President Gbagbo;
10. Welcomes the fact that UNSC Council Resolution 1975(2011) recalled the authorization and expressed the full support of the Security Council given to ONUCI to use all necessary means to carry out its mandate to protect civilians, including in order to prevent further use of heavy weapons; calls, in this respect, for a swift and significant reinforcement of ONUCI capacities in order to ensure effective protection of civilians in Ivory Coast;
11. Commends and supports the efforts of mediation under the auspices of the African Union and the ECOWAS and reiterates its calls on all political forces in Ivory Coast to actively support a peaceful transition and thus avoid further bloodshed;
12. Expresses its support for the AU plan for an overall peaceful solution to the crisis, including the setting up of a government of national union by President Ouattara; calls on Mr. Gbagbo to cease his obstruction of the implementation of this plan; stresses, in this context, that all African countries must show unity and act in a concerted way, so that peace can be restored in Ivory Coast;
13. Calls on the European Commission and the Member States to coordinate their efforts with

other international donors in order to respond adequately to the humanitarian crisis in Ivory Coast and neighboring countries;

14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the EU Council and Commission, the HR/VP Catherine Ashton, the UN Security Council and the UN Secretary General, the ONUCI, the institutions of the African Union, ECOWAS, the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly and the governments of EU Member States.