



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Plenary sitting

13.3.2012

B7-0161/2012

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.

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

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions, in particular that of 16 December 2010 on Eritrean refugees held hostage in Sinai,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951,
- having regard to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 1984,
- having regard to the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime of 2000,
- having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas Sinai is a principal transit route for asylum-seekers and migrants from sub-Saharan Africa and North Africa escaping extreme poverty and political turmoil and seeking refuge in Israel and beyond,

B. whereas reportedly an average of 2,000 people enter Israel through Sinai each month, many of them with the assistance of smugglers who have established a sizable network in this area; whereas, according to Israeli government estimates, around 50,000 Africans have illegally entered Israel through Sinai since 2005;

C. whereas thousands of asylum seekers and migrants lose their lives and disappear in Sinai every year while others, including many women and children, are kidnapped and held hostage for ransom by human traffickers; whereas victims of human traffickers are abused in the most dehumanising manner and are subject to systemic violence and torture, rape and sexual abuse, and forced labour;

D. whereas many female asylum seekers and migrants, who are in a particularly vulnerable situation, fall victim of human trafficking and the vast majority of them are repeatedly tortured, gang-raped and sodomised; whereas hundreds of them arrive in Israel pregnant as a result of rape;

E. whereas Egypt's border area with Israel in Sinai is a restricted military zone to which the country prohibits unauthorized entry; whereas a significant number of illegal migrants have been killed by Egyptian security forces in Sinai or have been prosecuted before military

tribunals in the country; whereas UN agencies and human rights organisations have no or only limited access to the area affected by human smuggling and trafficking in Sinai;

F. whereas Egypt adopted an anti-trafficking law in 2010, which prohibits and punishes all forms of human trafficking, but the implementation of this legislation requires further significant efforts; whereas Egypt established a National Coordination Committee to Prevent and Combat Human Trafficking in 2007;

G. whereas Israel reviews very few asylum requests but grants temporary protection to many migrants arriving to the country through Sinai; whereas illegal migrants in many cases continue being returned to Egypt by Israeli authorities without having a genuine opportunity to claim refugee status,

H. whereas the Knesset approved, in January 2012, a new law on illegal immigrants which has provoked widespread criticism from human rights organisations; whereas about 60 miles of the fence Israel builds along her border with Egypt, with the aim of preventing infiltrators and illegal migrants to enter the country, has been completed with plans to complete the rest by the end of this year;

I. whereas Egyptian and Israeli human rights organisations, such as Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, make considerable efforts to help, assist and provide medical treatment to victims of human traffickers in Sinai,

J. whereas the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children defines trafficking in persons as „the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation”,

1. Expresses its deep concerns that, despite widespread international appeals, human smuggling and trafficking in Sinai continues and further increases;

2. Urges Egypt, Israel and the international community to continue and further intensify their efforts to fight human smuggling and trafficking in Sinai;

3. Acknowledges that illegal migrants in Sinai pose a security risk for Egypt and Israel; however, urges again Egyptian and Israeli security forces to avoid the use of lethal force against illegal migrants;

4. Stresses the responsibility of Egyptian and Israeli authorities to stop the human traffickers in Sinai as well as to protect the victims; welcomes the efforts of the Egyptian and Israeli governments in this regard; calls, however, for more assistance and support for the victims, with special regard to women and children;

5. Reminds Egyptian and Israeli authorities of their obligations to fully respect international human rights law provisions and standards regarding the treatment, the protection of dignity and physical and psychological integrity, and the right to due process and fair trial of asylum

seekers and migrants as well as to guarantee that detained migrants have the ability to contact UNHCR and allow UNHCR access to all asylum seekers and refugees in state custody;

6. Reminds Egyptian and Israeli authorities of their obligations under international law to detain asylum seekers only as necessary to ascertain their identity and the basis of their asylum claims, allow detained migrants to present asylum claims and have those claims adjudicated prior to any decision to deport, refrain from returning asylum seekers and refugees to countries where they have a well-founded fear of persecution or face a real risk of torture, or to third countries that might not respect that prohibition, and ensure that detention of children is in line with international conventions and standards concerning the best interest of the child and family unity;

7. Calls for full access of UN agencies and human rights organisations to the areas affected by human smuggling and trafficking in Sinai;

8. Applauds the activities of Egyptian and Israeli human rights organisations providing help, assistance and medical treatment to victims of human traffickers in Sinai and urges the international community and the EU to support their work;

9. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative/Vice President of the Commission, the Parliaments and Governments of the Member States, the Parliament and Government of Egypt, the Knesset and the Government of Israel, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.