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Plenary sitting

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B7-0212/2012

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/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 Mali
(2012/2603(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

B7-0212/2012

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Mali
(2012/2603(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the UN Security Council statements on Mali of 22 and 26 March, and of 4 and 9 April 2012,
 - having regard to the statements by the EU HR Ashton regarding the situation in Mali of 22 and 26 March, and of 7 April 2012,
 - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 22 March 2012 rebel Malian soldiers took control of the country and announced the dissolution of the Government led by President Amadou Toumani Toure;
- B. whereas the country is also dealing with renewed fighting in the north between Government forces and Tuareg rebels, which has displaced more than 200 000 people since January; whereas the estimated number of internally displaced persons exceeds 100 000 and around 136 000 refugees have fled to neighbouring countries (Algeria, Mauritania, Niger and Burkina Faso) where the severe drought has already caused important food shortages in the last years;
- C. whereas the Tuareg rebels, mainly belonging to the National Movement for the Liberation of the Azawad (MNLA), battling alongside al-Qaeda-allied armed groups, swept through northern Mali after the military coup, pushed government forces from Kidal, Gao and Timbuktu, the three northern regions of Mali, and unilaterally proclaimed the independence of the new ‘Azawad’ state on 6 April 2012;
- D. whereas many Malians are trapped in the northern regions and have limited access to food and other basic necessities, while aid operations remain largely suspended due to insecurity and because in many cases the equipment, vehicles and stocks of aid agencies have been stolen;
- E. whereas according to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, the seizure by Tuareg-led rebels of much of northern Mali has led to serious human rights violations, looting and growing tension between ethnic groups;
- F. whereas on 16 April 2012, the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy, expressed her grave concern over reports of recruitment of child soldiers by Tuareg rebels and Islamist militias in Northern Mali;
- G. whereas the conditions of life of the displaced populations are of extreme poverty implying the unfulfilling of their basic human needs and the increase of social tensions;
- H. whereas more than 50 % of the displaced populations are women that are deprived of any

type of protection, and that constitute a particularly vulnerable population;

- I. whereas a framework agreement was signed on 6 April 2012 providing for a series of steps for the restoration of constitutional order in Mali between the leaders of the military coup in Mali and the Mediator of the Economic Commission for West African Countries (ECOWAS);
- J. whereas on 12 April 2012, M. Diacounda Traoré, ex-President of the National Assembly, was sworn in as President of Mali ad interim and whereas the nomination of a Prime Minister and the formation of a government of national unity are still pending;
- K. whereas the EU has a vital interest in the security, stability and development of the whole Sahel region, particularly at a time of serious food shortage that is affecting millions of people there; whereas the recent violence will exacerbate further the food emergency in northern Mali and in neighbouring countries where refugees are flowing to areas of acute food insecurity; whereas there is an EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel region;
 1. Condemns the military coup in Mali and the suspension of the republican institutions;
 2. Welcomes the signing of the framework agreement providing for a series of steps for the restoration of constitutional order; urges all concerned Malian stakeholders to implement this agreement immediately;
 3. Underlines that meanwhile Mali is struggling with a chronic malnutrition problem, exacerbated by the 2011 drought which caused a food crisis throughout the Sahel region, that Mali is one of the worst-affected with 1.4 million people in need of emergency food assistance and that capacity to respond quickly to the growing needs is limited by fighting and insecurity;
 4. Calls on all parties to maintain restraint with a view to restoring the authority of the elected representatives and to cooperate to ensure the early holding of elections under international supervision and a quick return to democracy;
 5. Reaffirms the need to uphold and respect the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Mali and reject categorically any declarations to the contrary; calls on the rebels in the North to stop military activities and to engage in negotiations with the legitimate representatives of the State;
 6. Welcomes and supports the strong lead taken by ECOWAS on the crisis, and particularly the clear message to the northern rebels that independence is not an option; considers that there is no military solution to the conflict in the north and that a solution must be found by negotiation;
 7. Commends the actions of ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations, as well as the neighbouring countries, to help Mali's quick return to constitutional order and to initiate concrete steps to protect the sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Mali; takes note of outcome of the conference held in Ouagadougou on 14-15 April 2012 under the auspices of President Blaise Compaoré, mediator appointed by ECOWAS and hopes

that the calendar and the modalities of the transition will be further clarified swiftly;

8. Calls on the EU and its Member States to actively support the next steps in the transition process, including by the sending of an electoral observation mission to monitor the elections, as well as the preparations for a joint ECOWAS-AU-UN force to support the transitional government in Mali; urges the HR/VP to accelerate the implementation of components of the EU Strategy for Security and Development in the Sahel region;
9. Condemns the serious human rights violations taking place in the rebel-controlled areas in North of Mali; is deeply concerned that the prolonging of the instability in the country might lead to the worsening of the human rights situation;
10. Expresses deep concern at the increased terrorist threat in the north of Mali due to the presence among the rebels of members of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb and extremist elements; in this regard condemns all violence and looting, including against humanitarian workers, and the abduction in Gao of Algerian diplomatic personnel;
11. Calls on the EU and its Member States to pay particular attention to the situation of women and girls in the region of the Sahel and to take all the necessary measures to ensure their protection from every type of violence and violations of their human rights;
12. Also condemns the abduction on 24-25 November 2011 of two French nationals, one Swede, a Dutchman and a South African holding a British passport, and the killing of a German citizen who resisted the kidnappers, which brings to twelve the number of European hostages in the Sahel area with Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb still holding two Spanish and one Italian nationals abducted in western Algeria in October 2011 and four French nationals abducted in Niger in September 2010;
13. Calls for the immediate release of all abductees and the immediate cessation of all violence and renews its call to all parties in Mali to seek a peaceful solution through appropriate political dialogue;
14. Reiterates its serious concern over the rapidly deteriorating humanitarian and food crisis situation and calls on the EU Commission and Member States to increase and speed up the delivery of humanitarian supplies to the populations in need; notes that the European Commission is giving an additional 9 million Euros to respond to the new humanitarian needs in northern Mali; points out that urgent efforts are needed in order to open up the humanitarian space and allow the food and medicine supply to reach northern Mali; is concerned that in the absence of such rapid measures, a major humanitarian crisis could develop which could also negatively impact neighbouring countries;
15. Charges its President to forward this resolution to the EU Council and Commission, the UN and AU Secretaries-General, ECOWAS and the transitional authorities of Mali.