



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

Plenary sitting

11.6.2013

B7-0295/2013

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation of Rohingya Muslims
(2013/2669(RSP))

Charles Tannock, Geoffrey Van Orden, Adam Bielan, Sajjad Karim,
on behalf of the ECR Group

B7-0295/2013

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of Rohingya Muslims
(2013/2669(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation of Rohingya Muslims, in particular the one of 13 September 2012,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on Burma of 22 April 2013,
- having regard to the statement of 1 June 2013 by the spokesperson of the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the agreement concluded between the Government of Burma and the Kachin Independence Organisation,
- having regard to the statement of 2 April 2013 by the spokesperson of the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the reported death of 13 children caused by a fire in a Muslim school in Burma,
- having regard to the statement of 23 March 2013 by the spokesperson of the EU High Representative Catherine Ashton on the violent clashes in the town of Meiktila in Burma,
- having regard to the UNHCR call of 13 November 2013 upon governments in Southeast Asia to keep their borders open to people fleeing Burma by sea,
- having regard to the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto,
- having regard to Articles 18 - 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948,
- having regard to Article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966,
- having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. Whereas the Rohingya, many of whom have settled in Rakhine state for centuries have not been recognised as one of Burma's 135 national groups and have thus been denied citizenship rights under the 1982 Citizenship Law thus becoming stateless;

B. Whereas the Rohingya are said to be one of the most persecuted minorities in the world;

C. Whereas this Muslim community that dates back many generations has been perceived by many Burmese to be illegal immigrants from Bangladesh and have been subject to systematic, severe discrimination and restrictions such as restriction on freedom of movement, marriage, education, healthcare and employment, land confiscation, forced labour, arbitrary arrest and harassment;

D. Whereas the origins of the word Rohingya, and the history of their settlement in Burma remains disputed;

E. Whereas the population of Rohingya is also present in other countries of the region such as Bangladesh, Pakistan, Thailand or Malaysia but the biggest percentage has been present in Burma;

F. Whereas the Rakhine majority in Burma has resented the presence of Rohingyas who they perceive as immigrant Muslims; public hostility towards the Rohingya minority has been continuous and the Burmese authorities have been regularly accused of being complicit in their persecution and stirring up the violence;

G. Whereas clashes between Buddhist and Muslim communities left almost 200 people dead the last year;

H. Whereas outbreaks of anti-Muslim violence have continued and only recently three women - one of who was pregnant - were killed when the police fired on protesters, last month one person was killed in the unrest in the northern town of Lashio, and in March at least 43 people were killed, some hacked to death, in violence in the central Burmese town of Meiktila;

I. Whereas thousands of Rohingya Muslims remain displaced in the wake of the violence, many living in segregated settlements and camps located in remote areas of the countryside, unsuitable for displacement camps, difficult to access by humanitarian teams, often cut off from lifesaving aid and in unacceptable insanitary conditions;

J. Whereas the need to find better location for thousands of displaced people is even more urgent now as the start of the monsoon rains is making the temporary location uninhabitable;

K. Whereas aid agencies encounter real difficulties in providing help to the displaced people as they have been facing threats and bureaucratic obstacles such as serious delays in granting travel authorisations and visas for humanitarian staff;

L. Whereas a campaign has been launched in Mandalay to boycott Muslim businesses and printed stickers are distributed with a '969' symbolizing elements of Buddhism to differentiate Buddhist shopkeepers and stalls;

M. Whereas a two-child limit policy has been introduced against the Rohingya, which is yet another example of systematic persecution of this minority group;

N. Whereas the Burmese government has yet to present a long-term proposals to resolve the persisting ethnic conflicts in the country;

O. Whereas, in the face of persistent persecution, an estimated 1 million Rohingyas have fled to neighbouring countries over the years, 300 000 to Bangladesh alone;

P. Whereas this exodus has serious implications for Burma's adjacent countries with Thailand in particular now struggling to cope with the influx while boats full of Rohingya continue to arrive to Thailand by sea;

Q. Whereas in the neighbouring countries to where the Rohingya have fled from violence and poverty live in immigration lock-ups which are extremely overcrowded and offering inhuman conditions;

1. Is alarmed about the living conditions of the Rohingya in the existing immigration facilities and urges the relevant governments to put all possible efforts to identify alternative arrangements as a matter of priority;

2. Recommends that the governments of the countries that cope with the influx of Rohingya refugees cooperate closely with UNHCR which has the technical expertise to screen for refugee status and the mandate to protect refugees and stateless people;

3. Calls on the international community to put pressure on Burma to end segregation against the Rohingya and to protect this people as one of this country's ethnic minorities as well as to restore their legal status;

4. Calls on the Burmese government to prioritise the safety of the Rohingya community and to end discriminatory policies such as the two-child regulation;

5. Applauds all sides for the spirit of compromise already displayed and emphasizes the urgent need for unhindered access for UN agencies and humanitarian nongovernmental organizations to all areas of Rakhine State;

6. Insists that the Rohingya minority cannot be left out of the newly developing openness for a multicultural democratic Burma and calls on the Government to amend the 1982 Citizenship Law in accordance to international human rights standards and its obligation under Article 7 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child and to ensure that displaced Rohingya have freedom of movement and be permitted to return to their place of residence once it is safe for them to do so;

7. Urges all countries in the region to come to the aid of refugees from Burma and to support the Burmese government in finding an equitable solution to the underlying causes;

8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Governments and Parliaments of Burma and of Thailand and Bangladesh, the EU High Representative, the Commission, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the Secretary General of ASEAN, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, the UN Special Representative for Human Rights in Myanmar, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Human Rights Council.