



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Plenary sitting

19.5.2015

B8-0472/2015

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 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on the plight of Rohingya refugees, including the mass graves in Thailand (2015/2711(RSP))

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

B8-0472/2015

**European Parliament resolution on the plight of Rohingya refugees, including the mass graves in Thailand
(2015/2711(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Burma/Myanmar, the Rohingya, in particular those of 20 April 2012⁽¹⁾, 13 September 2012⁽²⁾ and 22 November 2012⁽³⁾, 13 June 2013,
 - having regard to its resolution on the situation of Burmese refugees in Thailand of 5 February 2009,
 - having regard to the statement by UNHCR of 6 May 2015 concerning Rohingya mass grave in Thailand,
 - having regard to the EU Foreign Affairs Council conclusions of 22 April 2013 on Myanmar/Burma,
 - having regard to the statement of EU Commissioner for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, of 9 August 2012 on the situation of Rohingya Muslims,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) of 1966,
 - having regard to the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto,
 - having regard to the UNHCR call of 13 November 2012 upon governments in Southeast Asia to keep their borders open to people fleeing Burma by sea,
 - having regard to the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur of 6 March 2013 on the situation of human rights in Burma/Myanmar, as well as his statement of 11 June 2013 that ‘the human rights violations being committed against Rohingya in Rakhine State are widespread and systematic’,
 - having regard to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. Whereas on 1st and 4th May the police discovered at least 26 bodies of ethnic Rohingya Muslims in a suspected human trafficking camp close to the Thai-Malaysian border; whereas another camp with at least 5 other graves was found some days later and it is believed that there are dozens more of mass graves through Southern Thailand.

- B. Whereas the Rohingya have been leaving Burma in large numbers since an outbreak of violence in 2012 left neighbourhoods razed and claimed hundreds of lives; whereas many of those who escaped fell into the hands of trafficking gangs that operate within the Bay of Bengal.
 - C. Whereas some 25,000 Rohingya and Bangladeshis boarded smugglers' boats between January and March this year – almost double the number over the same period in 2014.
 - D. Whereas thousands of Rohingya people have been held captive in brutal camps in the jungle in southern Thailand where they are tortured, starved and beaten to death by their captors to extort ransom from their families and relatives overseas, or sold into human slavery.
 - E. Whereas an estimated 140,000 Rohingya now reside in squalid camps for internally displaced people in Thailand, unable to leave and policed by local security forces, which have been accused of a range of abuses.
 - F. Whereas there are widespread reports of death, torture, and exploitation of Rohingya, in many cases involving the complicity of Thai authorities.
 - G. Whereas Human Rights Watch suggests Thai authorities have ‘rescued’ Rohingya asylum seekers and then sold or handed them to trafficking syndicates, who in turn tortured them.
 - H. Whereas tens of thousands of Rohingyas have fled by sea to escape persecution, and whereas hundreds have lost their lives in sinking boats or by being pushed back into the sea;
 - I. Whereas UNHCR calls for a joint response in the wake of Rohingya mass grave in Thailand urging countries in the region to strengthen cooperation on counter-smuggling and counter-trafficking measures while ensuring the protection of victims.
 - J. Whereas under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, everyone has the right to seek asylum from persecution;
 - K. Whereas talks over a potential free trade agreement between the EU and Thailand were formally suspended in 2014.
 - L. Whereas the decision to pursue a possible EU -ASEAN trade agreement will be explored in the coming months.
1. Expresses deep concern at recent exhumations on 1 and 4 May of dozens of bodies from mass gravesites near human trafficking camps in southern Thailand and calls on the UN to constitute a Commission of Inquiry as soon as possible;
 2. Calls on Thai authorities to hold full, independent and credible investigations into the mass graves of Rohingya Muslims, with independent UN assistance, to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice;

3. Welcomes Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha's acknowledgement of the problem of human trafficking in Thailand and the region, and the complicity of some authorities in smuggling humans; calls on the Government of Thailand and its officials to end any complicity with the criminal gangs trafficking Rohingya people in Thailand;
4. Demands that the Government of Thailand acts to improve conditions in the Rohingya displacement camps as a matter of urgency;
5. Calls on all countries in the region to strengthen cooperation on counter-smuggling and counter-trafficking measures while ensuring the protection of victims;
6. Expresses disappointment that the Rohingya issue was not discussed in the recent 26th ASEAN Summit held between 26-28 April in Malaysia;
7. Stresses the need for urgent action by all countries in the region to deal with the humanitarian risks facing all displaced persons, and in particular the Rohingya people, in Burma/Myanmar, Malaysia and Thailand; reiterates its call on the Government of Burma/Myanmar to provide UN agencies and humanitarian NGOs, as well as journalists and diplomats, with unhindered access to all areas of the country, including Rakhine state, and to give unrestricted and full access to humanitarian aid for all communities affected by conflict and sectarian violence;
8. Urges all countries in the region to uphold their international obligations as regards the rights of refugees laid out in the UN Convention on Refugees and to provide Rohingya asylum seekers at least with temporary protection, whilst supporting the Burmese Government in finding long-term, equitable solutions to the underlying causes;
9. Urges the Government of Burma/Myanmar to continue to pursue and implement durable solutions to the underlying causes of the migration crisis, including measures addressing the status of the Rohingya; reiterates its earlier calls for an amendment or repeal of the 1982 Citizenship Law in order that Rohingyas have equal access to Burmese citizenship;
10. Calls on the Vice-President / High Representative to address this issue at the highest possible political level in her contacts with Thailand and with other ASEAN member countries;
11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of Burma/Myanmar, the Government and Parliament of Thailand, 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, the UN Human Rights Council and the governments and parliaments of other states in the region.