



Plenary sitting

B9-0327/2021

7.6.2021

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 132(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation in Afghanistan
(2021/2712(RSP))

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on behalf of the Renew Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Afghanistan
(2021/2712(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, of the other part, signed on 18 February 2017,
 - having regard to the North Atlantic Council statement on the Afghanistan Peace Negotiations of 9 December 2020,
 - having regard to the remarks by President Biden on the way forward in Afghanistan of 14 April 2021,
 - having regard to the Self-Reliance through Mutual Accountability Framework, agreed at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan of 4-5 October 2016,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the US has taken the unilateral decision to pull all troops out of Afghanistan by 11 September 2021; whereas NATO allies follow the principle of ‘in together, out together’, and will withdraw at the same time;
- B. whereas the Afghan peace talks between the Afghan government and Taliban started in 2020 in Doha; whereas the ceasefire agreement was not adhered to, and currently the peace talks are in a stalemate, with the Taliban waiting for the withdrawal of Allies troops;
- C. whereas representation of women and their rights in the Afghan peace talks is not proportional, and a more committed approach on this is required from the negotiating parties;
- D. whereas women, children and the ethnic minorities will be the most affected by the failure of the Afghan peace talks and attempts to pursue a military solution to the conflict; whereas Afghan women have already started limiting their movements to reduce risk, and children’s access to education and play is hampered by the threat of violence; whereas recently a girls’ school in Kabul was bombed, causing as many as 85 deaths, including of many schoolgirls;
- E. whereas women and girls continually face gender-based discrimination and violence throughout Afghanistan, which remains chronically under-reported; whereas women and girls often fear reprisals and do not trust the authorities, and those who do, experience the authorities’ persistent failure to investigate cases of targeted violence against them;
- F. whereas it is paramount to preserve the progress of the past two decades in Afghanistan, particularly regarding human rights and fundamental freedoms;

- G. whereas the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically increased the poverty rate in Afghanistan; whereas COVID-19-related measures and the deteriorating security situation have resulted in restrictions to the access of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people;
- H. whereas since the start of the pandemic, the EU has mobilised almost EUR 147 million to address the immediate health crisis and to provide humanitarian assistance to people in need; whereas the EU has recently announced additional support of EUR 35 million to tackle the ongoing pandemic and to mitigate its socio-economic impacts in Afghanistan;
- I. whereas in 2021 Afghanistan is expecting to face a drought, increasing the current number of 5.5 million people experiencing emergency level food insecurity, with an additional 17.6 million expected to face acute food insecurity;
- J. whereas the EU is the main development aid provider in Afghanistan, having provided more than EUR 4 billion in development aid since 2002;
- K. whereas at the 2020 Geneva Conference on Afghanistan, the EU pledged EUR 1.2 billion period in both long-term and emergency assistance to Afghanistan for the 2021-2025; whereas this pledge was accompanied by a communication by the EU and countries that together account for about 80 % of the total official development assistance to Afghanistan underlining the key elements for the country to continue receiving assistance, including a continued commitment to democracy, the rule of law and human rights;
- L. whereas the security situation in Afghanistan is gradually worsening, and the number of attacks against Afghan forces is growing, as well as targeted assassinations of Afghan activists, media workers, educators, doctors, judges and government officials;
- M. whereas the number of Taliban attacks has increased significantly since the beginning of the Afghan peace talks, aiming to take over control of government-controlled territories;
- N. whereas the economic cost of terrorism in Afghanistan was equivalent to almost 20 % of its GDP in 2018, and deprives Afghan children of their future, the possibility of obtaining an education, prospects for a stable employment and services such as healthcare provided by the state;
- O. whereas Afghan businesses suffer from Taliban extortion, in which farmers are forced into opium cultivation and illegal mining activities;
- P. whereas Afghanistan is one of the least peaceful countries in the world and has one of the highest number of registered refugees;
- Q. whereas four million out of the country's population of 36 million are displaced persons; whereas 2.5 million Afghans have already fled the country in search of security;
- R. whereas a resurgent Taliban and the collapse of the Afghan government could lead to a

renewed surge of migration to Europe;

1. Expresses its deep concern about the increased violence in Afghanistan, and condemns in the strongest possible terms terrorist attacks and the unacceptable level of violence perpetrated by the Taliban against the national forces of Afghanistan and civilians, and the targeted assassinations of civil rights activists, media workers, educators, doctors, judges and government officials; expresses its deepest condolences and support to the victims of terror attacks and their families;
2. Is very worried about the findings of the UN Monitoring Team's report indicating that the relationship between the Taliban and al-Qaida has grown deeper, and its warning that the Taliban would be opposed to peace talks and prefer a military takeover. takes note, furthermore, of the reports that indicate that the Taliban is actively preparing military operations in 2021;
3. Calls for a credible and transparent investigation under UN auspices into the attack which targeted a girls' school, killing 85 people, mostly girls, from the Hazara Shia minority between the ages of 11 and 17; also calls on the UN to establish a commission of inquiry to investigate the increased number of attacks on civilian facilities, including schools and mosques;
4. Calls for the immediate resumption of the Afghan peace talks and an immediate, permanent and comprehensive ceasefire, which is a prerequisite for creating trust and demonstrating the Taliban's genuine commitment to lasting reconciliation;
5. Reiterates the need for continuous EU support to assist Afghanistan in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide the Afghans with vaccines, and to help to organise vaccination efforts;
6. Supports the Afghan-led and Afghan owned peace process; calls on the parties to come to an agreement which protects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Afghans, particularly women, children and minorities, and to build on the economic, social, political and development gains achieved since 2001 under a democratic constitutional framework;
7. Underlines that only a political settlement offers hope for lasting peace; recommends that the parties seek help from a third party mediator, such as the United Nations, to help agree on a political roadmap for a prosperous Afghanistan, at peace with itself and its neighbours;
8. Notes that Afghanistan continues to be designated as one of the deadliest countries in the world for children; calls on the EU and the Afghan government to ensure adequate protection for children to prevent them being recruited to combat for armed groups or the Afghan security forces;
9. Stresses the need to avoid a 'failed state' scenario, and reconfirms its strong commitment to continue its support for Afghanistan and the Afghan government to fund civilian reconstruction and help to conclude the ongoing peace negotiations;
10. Urges the Council and the Commission to prepare a comprehensive strategy for future

- cooperation with Afghanistan after the withdrawal of NATO allies' troops;
11. Highlights the importance of effective regional cooperation with Afghanistan's neighbouring states for working towards stability and lasting peace;
 12. Stresses the need for clear benchmarks and monitoring mechanisms to measure the progress made and the efficient and transparent use of European funds;
 13. Emphasises that European aid will remain conditioned to the achievements of the past 20 years in building the state, women's rights and education;
 14. Recognises the work of local and international non-governmental organizations, which provide services, assistance and relief to the Afghan people despite the security risks;
 15. Underlines that the EU has an interest to invest in Afghan stability in order to avoid migration challenges, the production and trafficking of illicit drugs and the harbouring of terrorist fighters;
 16. Warns that the international community must ensure that Afghanistan will not be used again by terrorist groups to threaten the security of other countries;
 17. Emphasises the significance of effective cooperation between the EU and NATO after the troop withdrawal in assisting the Afghan national forces in providing security to the people of Afghanistan; supports the continuous funding and training of the Afghan security forces;
 18. Reconfirms the EU's commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, including its financing, the dismantling of terrorist infrastructures and countering radicalisation;
 19. Notes that humanitarian aid will continue to be needed for the foreseeable future, and that access of humanitarian and development actors must be ensured throughout the country in full compliance with humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law; calls for an increase in support to the Afghan health system, particularly for women's healthcare;
 20. Calls for an increase to the EU's contribution to humanitarian response in order to mitigate the impact of the drought forecast in Afghanistan, particularly to close the funding gap so as to provide humanitarian food assistance and advocacy for conflicting parties and government authorities to secure humanitarian access;
 21. Points at the potential economic growth Afghanistan could develop using its natural resources such as lithium, natural gas, cobalt, gold and other mineral deposits;
 22. Stresses that European aid for the development of infrastructure and the promotion of mining could benefit the Afghan people by providing employment and resources for critical public services;
 23. Stresses the need to use European funds to invest in improving regional connectivity to facilitate trade and transit, which would give Afghanistan the means to grow

economically;

24. Expresses its willingness for closer engagement with the Afghan authorities, particularly the National Assembly, and Afghan civil society;
25. Calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure a continuous and safe presence of the EU Delegation to Afghanistan, and to cooperate with the international community in order to enable a continued diplomatic, development and humanitarian presence;
26. Calls on the Member States to grant visas to local personnel on the basis of a justified risk to their lives as a result of their cooperation with and service to the allied forces; calls for this to be preceded by a thorough individual assessment, taking full account of all eligibility and security aspects;
27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Envoy for Afghanistan, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.