



Plenary sitting

B9-0528/2022

22.11.2022

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 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the forced displacement of people as a result of escalating conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

(2022/2957(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

European Parliament resolution on the forced displacement of people as a result of escalating conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

(2022/2957(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC),
- having regard to the joint communique of 30 September 2021 of the third session of the political dialogue DRC-EU,
- having regard to the statement of 4 July 2022 by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) Josep Borrell on the situation in eastern DRC,
- having regard to the press statement of the UN Security Council of 12 July 2022 on the situation in DRC,
- having regard to the press statement of the UN Security Council of 27 July 2022 on the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC,
- having regard to the report of the UN Secretary General of 4 October 2022 on the Implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the DRC and the Region,
- having regard to the statement by the spokesperson for the UN Secretary General of 30 October 2022 on the Renewed Hostilities in the DRC,
- having regard to the joint communique of 30 October 2022 of the Chair of the African Union and the Chairperson of the AU Commission on the situation in the East of DRC,
- having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas a complex combination of reasons has led to a prolonged conflict and humanitarian crisis in the DRC: decades of corruption, two regional wars, poor governance and infrastructure, deep-rooted mistrust between civilians and security forces in eastern DRC, inter alia due to impunity, extreme violence including sexual violence against women and girls, recruitment of children and young people into armed groups, illicit trade of natural resources, recurrent outbreaks of Ebola, food insecurity, the largest displaced population in Africa with more than 5.5 million internally displaced persons;

- B. whereas the March 23 Movement (M23) armed group resumed hostilities against DRC troops in November 2021 causing significant human suffering, including deaths and injuries among civilians and significant numbers of newly displaced persons;
- C. whereas humanitarian actors estimated that at least 183,000 people have been displaced since 20 October 2022, bringing the total to more than 232,000 civilians since the resumption of hostilities by M23; whereas these displaced persons currently live in makeshift camps or with host families in Lubero and Nyiragongo territories, as well as in Goma and other localities in Rutshuru territory; whereas hundreds of children have been separated from their parents and guardians as people flee rebel attacks;
- D. whereas M23 has carried out attacks on schools and hospitals, abducted medical personnel and looted considerable civilian property and whereas conflict related sexual violence has been reported; whereas on 27 May 2022, the Congolese government declared the M23 a terrorist movement;
- E. whereas eastern DRC, where there is limited state presence, is considered the refuge of foreign armed groups that engage in incursions in neighbouring countries like Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi; whereas for those neighbouring countries this provides cause for their militaries to invade eastern DRC under the pretext of stopping those groups;
- F. whereas along with the M23 insurgency, other armed groups have also intensified attacks on both military and civilian targets in eastern DRC, such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF), an Ugandan outfit whose biggest faction has sworn allegiance to the Islamic State and RED-Tabara, a Burundian rebel group based in the DRC;
- G. whereas the East African Community (EAC) undertook in the framework of the Nairobi Process to deploy a regional force (comprising contingents from Burundi, Kenya, Uganda and South Sudan) to eastern DRC to help the armed forces of the DRC (FARDC) combat the armed groups;
- H. whereas the conflict has intensified the diplomatic rift between the DRC and Rwanda and is negatively impacting peacebuilding efforts in the Great Lakes region; whereas Congo accuses Rwanda of supporting the M23 rebels in Congo's eastern provinces, a claim Rwanda denies; whereas on 29 October 2022, the Congolese authorities gave Rwandan ambassador Vincent Karenga 48 hours to leave the country for Rwanda's alleged support to the M23 armed group;
- I. whereas one of the main drivers of violence and the predatory nature of armed groups in the DRC are the vast mineral resources in the eastern region of North and South Kivu as well as illicit border trade; whereas the EU Conflict Minerals Regulation came into force on 1 January 2021; whereas all the parties in the conflict are using revenues from minerals trading to fund their fighting; whereas the multinational mining companies active in the DRC, such as Chinese multinational corporations, have created very few jobs and are exploiting deposits of rare minerals in a predatory manner without any benefit to the citizens of the DRC; whereas local companies have no access to international markets; whereas human rights violations, child labour, environmental damage and social tensions are a huge challenge in artisanal and small-scale mines in particular;
- J. whereas Russia's diamond producer Alrosa signed in September 2022 a memorandum of understanding with the state-controlled Congolese diamond company MIBA, after

the DRC said it would search compensation in line with the “polluter pays” principle for a leak in July 2022 from a dam at a diamond mine in Angola partly owned by Alrosa which polluted a tributary of the Congo river and drinking water, causing 12 deaths and making thousands of people in the DRC ill;

- K. whereas the ongoing hostilities have increased intercommunal tensions, hate speech and incitement to discrimination;
 - L. whereas the prevailing situation has further restricted the civic space and journalists reporting on the renewed clashes have been threatened and harassed on social media and by intelligence services in a bid to influence their reporting;
 - M. whereas the EU Foreign Affairs Council of 14 November 2022 agreed on the need to renew the EU’s strategy on the Great Lakes region as early as at the December Foreign Affairs Council, in order to support the region “to move from tensions to trust, from trafficking to trade and from competition to regional integration”;
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- 1. Strongly condemns the resumption of fighting by the M23 armed group in eastern DRC and calls for an immediate cessation of hostilities;
 - 2. Calls for the M23 and other Congolese armed groups to withdraw from their positions, disarm, join the Inter-Congolese dialogue (Nairobi process) and participate unconditionally in the disarmament, demobilization, community recovery and stabilization programme (P-DDRCS), and for foreign armed groups to immediately disarm and return to their countries of origin;
 - 3. Calls on all actors in the region to stop any support or cooperation with M23 or other non-state armed groups and to combat the illicit trade of natural resources that fuels conflict;
 - 4. Urges all sides to protect civilians in line with international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including by allowing and facilitating unfettered humanitarian access to all in need and making possible the return of displaced persons, and to ensure that the perpetrators of human rights and international humanitarian law breaches are brought to justice;
 - 5. Recalls that hate speech, incitement and violence are unacceptable under any circumstances; calls on all actors to address hate speech and incitement to discrimination and violence;
 - 6. Underlines the importance of supporting the progress of security sector reform in the DRC and calls on the Government of the DRC to consolidate progress on the restoration of State authority;
 - 7. Urges the EU to address the challenge to peace and security created by neighbouring countries support for rebel groups in the DRC and to support the Nairobi Process and the Luanda Roadmap in order to find a lasting resolution;
 - 8. Asks that a new EU strategy for the Great Lakes region adequately reflects and prioritizes the numerous challenges and opportunities at both country and regional level;

9. 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 ACP-EU Council of Ministers and Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the President, Prime Minister and Parliament of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the African Union and the East African Community.