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B6-0565/2008 }
B6-0569/2008 } RC1

JOINT MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

pursuant to Rule 115(5) of the Rules of Procedure, by

- Hans-Peter Mayer, Bernd Posselt, Jürgen Schröder, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Tunne Kelam and Tadeusz Zwiefka, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
- Pasqualina Napoletano, Alain Hutchinson and Thijs Berman, on behalf of the PSE Group
- Renate Weber, Fiona Hall, Frédérique Ries, Marielle De Sarnez, Sophia in 't Veld and Marios Matsakis, on behalf of the ALDE Group
- Raül Romeva i Rueda, Marie-Hélène Aubert, Margrete Auken and Jean Lambert, on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group
- Eoin Ryan, on behalf of the UEN Group

replacing the motions by the following groups:

- ALDE (B6-0556/2008)
- PSE (B6-0559/2008)
- Verts/ALE (B6-0563/2008)
- PPE-DE (B6-0565/2008)
- UEN (B6-0569/2008)

on Congo: clashes in the eastern border areas of the DRC

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European Parliament resolution on Congo: clashes in the eastern border areas of the DRC

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 21 February 2008 on North Kivu,
 - having regard to its resolution of 17 January 2008 on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and rape as a war crime and to its previous resolutions on human rights abuses in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),
 - having regard to the resolution of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly of 22 November 2007 on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, in particular in the east, and its impact on the region,
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 November 2007 on the EU response to situations of fragility in developing countries,
 - having regard to the communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions entitled 'Towards an EU response to situations of fragility – engaging in difficult environments for sustainable development, stability and peace' (COM(2007)0643) and the Commission staff working document annexed thereto (SEC(2007)1417),
 - having regard to Resolution 60/1 of the United Nations General Assembly of 24 October 2005 on the 2005 World Summit outcome, and in particular paragraphs 138 to 140 thereof on the responsibility to protect populations,
 - having regard to the Council declaration of 10 October 2008 on the situation in the eastern part of the DRC,
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the fighting between the Congolese Army, the rebel troops of ousted General Laurent Nkunda, the fighters of the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) and troops of Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has been causing tremendous hardship to the civilian populations of the eastern provinces of the DRC for many months,
- B. whereas when heavy fighting took place around the border village of Rumangabo, near Goma, a strategically important military camp was overrun by Nkunda's rebels, allowing them to seize weapons and supplies,
- C. whereas, according to UNHCR reports, the renewed fighting in North Kivu has led to a high number of casualties and more than 100 000 displaced persons, and whereas there are also reports of hundreds of dead bodies being thrown into the river and 50 000 displaced persons after heavy fighting involving the LRA in the province of Ituri,
- D. whereas since the Goma peace accord signed on 23 January 2008 there have been massacres,

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rapes of young girls, mothers and grandmothers, forced recruitments of civilians and child soldiers and a host of other acts of violence and serious human rights abuses in the eastern DRC, both by Laurent Nkunda's rebel troops and by FDLR combatants and the Congolese Army itself,

- E. whereas MONUC has a mandate under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter which authorises it to use all necessary means to deter any attempted use of force on the part of any foreign or Congolese armed group, particularly ex-FAR and Interahamwe fighters, which would threaten the political process and to ensure the protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence,
- F. having regard to the undertakings concerning gradual demobilisation and the ceasefire commitment given at the Goma Conference for Peace, Security and Development, including a ceasefire among all warring parties, the disarmament of all non-governmental forces, the return and resettlement of all displaced peoples in the eastern DRC and the establishment of a temporary mechanism for ceasefire monitoring,
- G. whereas the Congolese Army does not have the human, technical and financial resources necessary to carry out its tasks in the eastern provinces of the DRC, a state of affairs which is undermining its role in protecting the population and re-establishing peace,
- H. whereas it is vital to find a political solution to the conflict in the eastern provinces of the DRC, so as to consolidate peace and democracy and promote stability and development in the region for the well-being of all the peoples of the Great Lakes region,
- I. whereas the civil war in the region, which has been under way for four years, has been marked by the systematic pillaging of the country's wealth by the allies and enemies of the Congolese Government,
- J. whereas several humanitarian organisations have been forced to suspend their activities following the hostilities at the end of 2007, whilst health centres remain without supplies or have been abandoned by their medical staff,
- K. whereas, in order to achieve a significant improvement in health and a reduction in the mortality rate in the DRC as a whole and in its eastern provinces in particular, years of sustained commitment and a substantial financial investment will be required both from the Congolese Government and the international community,
- L. whereas humanitarian aid workers have reported that the local and displaced populations in the eastern provinces of the DRC are growing progressively weaker and that the continuing warfare is preventing aid workers from gaining access to certain areas which are in need of urgent food and medical aid,
- M. whereas malnutrition is a further aspect of the extreme vulnerability of the populations now living in the eastern provinces of the DRC, and whereas the data from Médecins sans Frontières' (MSF) medical aid programmes offer an alarming indication of the scale of malnutrition in the eastern provinces of the DRC,

- N. whereas the EU firmly condemns the recent statements by Laurent Nkunda calling for the overthrow of the elected and legitimate government of the DRC,
1. Is extremely concerned about the renewed fighting between the Congolese Army and resurgent militias in North Kivu and the previously pacified region of Ituri;
 2. Expresses its deep outrage at the massacres, crimes against humanity and acts of sexual violence against women and girls which have been continuing for too many years in the eastern provinces of the DRC and calls on all relevant national and international authorities systematically to bring the perpetrators to justice, whoever they may be, and calls on the United Nations Security Council, as a matter of urgency, to take all measures capable of genuinely preventing any further attacks on the civilian population of the eastern provinces of the DRC;
 3. Calls on the Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP - National Congress for the Defence of the People) to return immediately and unconditionally to the peace process to which it committed itself in Goma in January 2008;
 4. Urges all actors to restore the rule of law and fight impunity, specifically in connection with the mass rapes of women and girls and the recruitment of child soldiers;
 5. Calls on the Government of the DRC to develop a plan with Rwanda and MONUC to isolate and capture the leaders of the genocide among the FDLR and offer resettlement in the Congo or reintegration in Rwanda to those who were not involved in the genocide and are willing to demobilise;
 6. Calls on the international community and the UN Security Council to strengthen MONUC by providing appropriate materials and staff to enable it to fulfil its mandate, as was requested by the head of MONUC, Alan Doss, in New York after he had briefed the UN Security Council;
 7. Welcomes the fact that the President of the DRC and his ministers have publicly expressed their support for MONUC in respect of its contribution to national security;
 8. Calls on MONUC to investigate accusations that the Congolese Army is colluding with the FDLR over control of North Kivu's lucrative mineral trade and to put an end to this practice;
 9. Reaffirms its support for the Congolese authorities in their efforts to find a political solution to the crisis and calls on all the parties to respect the ceasefire;
 10. Notes with concern that elements from the LRA have recently conducted attacks on 16 localities in the DRC's eastern territories of Dungeni, Province Orientale and Ituri, where UNHCR reports of about 80 missing children are confirming fears of new forced recruitment campaigns involving child soldiers;
 11. Underlines that the grouping of people along ethnic lines during the displacement process is potentially dangerous in the current circumstances;

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12. Calls for zero tolerance of the sexual violence against girls and women which is used as a weapon of war and for severe criminal penalties to be imposed on the perpetrators of these crimes; draws attention to the importance of access to reproductive health and counselling services in conflict situations and refugee camps;
13. Calls on all the parties to stand by their commitments to protect the civilian population and respect human rights, as outlined in the Goma peace agreement and the Nairobi Communiqué, and to implement them swiftly;
14. Calls on the governments of the DRC and Rwanda to stop the recent verbal hostilities, return to a constructive dialogue and put an end to the conflict;
15. Encourages all the governments of the Great Lakes region to initiate a dialogue with the aim of coordinating their efforts to lower tensions and stop the violence in the eastern DRC before this conflict spreads to the region as a whole;
16. Calls on the Council and Commission to implement with immediate effect large-scale medical assistance and reintegration programmes for the civilian populations in the eastern DRC, with particular focus on assistance for women and girls affected by crimes of sexual violence, in order to meet immediate needs and in anticipation of the reconstruction which will be required; notes the key role played by women in rebuilding shattered communities;
17. Calls on the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court to investigate atrocity crimes committed in the Kivus and Ituri since June 2003 and prosecute those most clearly responsible; those persons should include the principal militia chiefs who have not been arrested and those responsible for massacres and sexual violence;
18. Calls for the effective establishment of monitoring mechanisms, such as the Kimberley process for the certification of the origin of natural resources imported into the EU market;
19. Calls on the Council and every EU Member State to provide special aid to the populations of the eastern DRC;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the institutions of the African Union, the High Representative for the CFSP, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the parliaments and governments of the Great Lakes region.