



TEXTS ADOPTED

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South Sudan

European Parliament resolution of 18 May 2017 on South Sudan (2017/2683(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Sudan and South Sudan,
- having regard to the statement of 8 May 2017 issued by the Troika (the US, UK and Norway) and the EU on the security situation in South Sudan,
- having regard to the statement of 29 April 2017 issued by the spokesperson of the UN Secretary-General on South Sudan,
- having regard to the final report of 13 April 2017 of the UN Security Council Panel of Experts on South Sudan,
- having regard to the communiqué of 25 March 2017 of the 30th extraordinary summit of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) on South Sudan,
- having regard to the outcome of the 34th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva, of 27 February to 24 March 2017,
- having regard to the statement of 23 March 2017 issued by the President of the UN Security Council on South Sudan,
- having regard to the Commission statement to the European Parliament of 1 February 2017,
- having regard to UN Security Council resolution 2327 (2016) of 16 December 2016,
- having regard to the European Council conclusions on South Sudan of 12 December 2016,
- having regard to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs humanitarian report of 9 May 2017,
- having regard to the IGAD Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) of 17 August 2015,
- having regard to the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) of 2005,

- having regard to the revised Cotonou Agreement,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
 - having regard to the Arms Trade Treaty,
 - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas South Sudan has been embroiled in a civil war for over three years, which erupted after Salva Kiir, the country's president and a member of the Dinka ethnic group, accused his sacked vice-president, Riek Machar, an ethnic Nuer, of plotting a coup d'état against him; whereas Riek Machar has denied attempting a coup;
 - B. whereas despite the signing of the ARCSS in August 2015, there continues to be a total disregard for international human rights and humanitarian law and a lack of accountability for violations and abuses committed in the conflict;
 - C. whereas the country is facing famine and economic collapse as a result of the civil war, with over 3,6 million people forced to flee their homes and an estimated 4,9 million people being made food insecure; whereas humanitarian needs have continued to escalate to alarming levels, with an estimated 7,5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance and more than one million people currently receiving shelter on UN premises; whereas UN agencies have increased their appeal for humanitarian aid, saying they needed at least USD 1,4 billion to help alleviate 'unimaginable' levels of suffering; whereas just 14 % of this call has been funded to date;
 - D. whereas, at current rates, by the end of 2017 half of the country's population will have perished or been displaced; whereas it is unknown how many people have been killed as a result of the violence;
 - E. whereas, according to the most recent UN panel of experts report, the Government of South Sudan has been found to be one of the biggest perpetrators of violence and human rights abuses in the country, with the famine being considered 'man-made' and the South Sudanese Government's squandering of money on arms being considered one of the main causes;
 - F. whereas in recent weeks large government offensives in Yuai, Waat, Tonga and Kodok have resulted in tragic humanitarian consequences, including the displacement of 50 000-100 000 individuals; whereas this follows the killing of numerous civilians on 8 April 2017 in the western town of Wau as an act of collective punishment on grounds of ethnicity and political views; whereas government forces are continuing to target civilians, in violation of the law of armed conflict, and have blocked the UN mission from protecting civilians;
 - G. whereas hospitals and clinics have been destroyed by the government, which constitutes a war crime; whereas equipment from hospitals and clinics has been stolen, which has led to the closure of premises and people not being able to receive lifesaving medical care;

- H. whereas nearly one in every three schools in South Sudan has been destroyed, damaged, occupied or closed, impacting on the education of an entire generation of children; whereas more than 600 000 children under the age of five are estimated to be acutely malnourished;
- I. whereas approximately two million children have fled the country, constituting 62 % of the refugees who have left South Sudan, with the conflict causing them unbearable trauma, stress and emotional upheaval; whereas an estimated 17 000 children, mostly boys, have been recruited or used as soldiers by armed forces and groups in the country; whereas thousands of children have been killed, raped, displaced or orphaned;
- J. whereas women and girls are systematically raped and abducted as a weapon of war, with a UN survey finding that 70 % of women living in camps for internally displaced persons in Juba had been raped, the vast majority by police or soldiers;
- K. whereas owing to instability in neighbouring countries, South Sudan is also hosting approximately 270 000 refugees from Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia and the Central African Republic (CAR);
- L. whereas in June 2016 the World Health Organisation declared a cholera outbreak, which has already affected thousands and has reportedly spread further in recent weeks; whereas many deaths from cholera, malaria, measles, diarrhoea and acute respiratory illnesses are the result of extreme poverty and deplorable living conditions and many deaths could have been prevented if only those people had had access to health care;
- M. whereas the ARCSS stipulates that the mandate of the Transitional Government of National Unity (TGNU) should end following elections in August 2018;
- N. whereas, according to UN and other credible reports, brokers based in EU Member States and numerous third countries have transferred helicopters and machine guns to armed factions in South Sudan and provided military logistical assistance; whereas the protracted nature of the conflict has allowed the emergence of new armed groups and the militarisation of society;
- O. whereas the number of attacks against humanitarian convoys and personnel is extremely worrisome; whereas at least 79 aid workers have been killed since December 2013; whereas, most recently, in March 2017, six aid workers and their drivers were killed in what was the deadliest attack against humanitarian aid workers so far;
- P. whereas on 21 February 2017 the Commission announced an emergency aid package worth EUR 82 million following the outbreak of famine; whereas the EU is one of the biggest donors to the country, providing more than 40 % of all humanitarian financing to support life-saving programmes in 2016 and some EUR 381 million in humanitarian assistance since the beginning of the conflict in 2013;
- 1. Expresses its deep concern about the ongoing conflict in South Sudan; calls for an immediate end to all military operations and once again reminds President Salva Kiir, as well as the former Vice-President, Riek Machar, of their obligations under the ARCSS; calls on President Kiir to implement immediately his commitment to a unilateral ceasefire as conveyed to the IGAD heads of state on 25 March 2017;
- 2. Calls for the immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all

acts of sexual violence against civilians, especially against women and girls; recalls that rape as a weapon of war constitutes a war crime punishable under international law; calls on the Government of South Sudan to afford protection to all vulnerable groups, to bring perpetrators to justice and to end impunity among the police and military;

3. Denounces all attacks against civilians and humanitarian aid workers, attacks against the latter disrupting lifesaving aid and supplies; underlines that there can be no military solution to the conflict and that the Government of South Sudan must ensure that there is a meaningful ceasefire which shows a genuine commitment to peace and stability; believes that a commitment to peace must go beyond a simple cessation of hostilities and must include withdrawing troops, disbanding ethnic militias, allowing unhindered humanitarian assistance and releasing political detainees;
4. Expresses its deepest concern about the grave humanitarian situation throughout the country, which is continuing to deteriorate; calls therefore once again for the EU and its Member States to increase humanitarian aid in order to relieve the famine, and to press the Government of South Sudan to ensure that humanitarian aid supply routes remain open;
5. Deplores the recruitment of children into armed conflict by all sides in South Sudan; underlines that recruitment of children by parties to a conflict is a war crime, for which commanders must be held criminally responsible; warns that an entire generation of young people are now at risk of experiencing severe trauma, severe emotional upheaval and receiving no education; calls for EU humanitarian and development programming to assist in providing basic education and long-term rehabilitation and counselling; strongly condemns the use of education facilities for military operations;
6. Calls on the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to use all available resources to involve the UN, the African Union (AU) and IGAD in launching a new political process to achieve a sustained ceasefire and full implementation of the security and governance chapters of the peace agreement;
7. Takes the view that the AU, supported by the EU and its Member States, must take an active role in mediating a political solution to achieve lasting peace in South Sudan, including by devoting more resources to the AU's envoy to South Sudan, Alpha Oumar Konare; supports calls for an international conference to be organised by the AU Commission, with the participation of the UN and IGAD, with a view to unifying and reconciling international efforts to end the war in South Sudan;
8. Reiterates its full support for the work of the UN Special Representative for South Sudan and for the mandate of the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and its Regional Protection Force, which are tasked with protecting civilians and deterring violence against them, and creating the conditions necessary for delivery of humanitarian aid; calls on all parties to facilitate the rapid deployment of an active Regional Protection Force mandated by the UN Security Council, which is intended to reinforce an active UNMISS presence, and calls on the Member States and the VP/HR to urgently and significantly strengthen UNMISS with European capacities;
9. Underlines, as a matter of urgency, the need to establish a hybrid court for South Sudan, involving the adoption of legal statutes by the AU and assistance with resources from

the UN and EU; recalls that this is part of the 2016 peace agreement and should therefore not be open to renegotiation;

10. Insists that, in order to be meaningful and inclusive, the process of national dialogue should meet clear benchmarks, including neutral leadership and the inclusion of opposition groups and South Sudanese citizens living outside the country, and that it must also include representatives from all parties to the conflict and other South Sudanese stakeholders, including women's representatives, to be legitimate and effective;
11. Condemns all attempts to restrict freedom of expression, which is a basic human right and part of genuine political debate; deplores the killing of humanitarian aid workers, civil society representatives and journalists, and demands that the perpetrators of such crimes be brought to justice; calls for the immediate release of all political prisoners;
12. Condemns all attacks on educational and public buildings and the use of schools for military purposes; calls on the parties to respect the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict;
13. Regrets the UN Security Council's failure to adopt a resolution on 23 December 2016 that would have imposed an arms embargo on South Sudan and placed a travel ban and asset freeze on three senior South Sudanese leaders; calls for the EU to pursue an international arms embargo against South Sudan, and for it to be enforced effectively; is alarmed by reports of arms transfers to South Sudan, in violation of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP, facilitated by brokers based in EU Member States; urges the Member States and the VP/HR to enforce compliance with the EU arms control regime and to formally engage with any third country proved to be exporting arms and military logistical assistance to South Sudan;
14. Calls on the authorities to ensure that any return or relocation of internally displaced persons is conducted in a safe and dignified manner; calls for the use of targeted sanctions against any key political or military figure in the government or opposition who perpetuates the conflict or commits human rights abuses, as part of an EU strategy to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid, the preservation of a ceasefire and the delivery of a renewed political process to implement the peace agreement;
15. Believes that, owing to the recurring conflict, insecurity and mass displacement of people, credible and peaceful elections cannot be held in the current political environment; recalls that the mandate of the Transitional Government of National Unity runs until June 2018; underlines the importance of giving South Sudanese women a full role in the peace-talks and in governing the country; calls for the EU to support women at grassroots level, who make a measurable difference in the quality of peace negotiations by turning the tide of suspicion and who build trust and promote reconciliation;
16. 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 of South Sudan, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Human Rights Commissioner of South Sudan, the National Legislative Assembly of South Sudan, the African Union's institutions, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint

Parliamentary Assembly and the UN Secretary-General.