



TEXTS ADOPTED

P8_TA(2017)0351

Myanmar, in particular the situation of Rohingyas

European Parliament resolution of 14 September 2017 on Myanmar, in particular the situation of Rohingyas (2017/2838(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Myanmar and on the situation of Rohingya Muslims, in particular those of 7 July 2016¹ and of 15 December 2016², and to its resolutions of 16 March 2017 on EU priorities for the UN Human Rights Council sessions in 2017³ and of 13 June 2017 on statelessness in South and South East Asia⁴,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on the EU strategy with Myanmar/Burma of 20 June 2016,
- having regard to the joint communication of 1 June 2016 by the Commission and the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) to the European Parliament and the Council entitled ‘Elements for an EU strategy vis-à-vis Myanmar/Burma: A Special Partnership for Democracy, Peace and Prosperity’ (JOIN(2016)0024),
- having regard to the statement of 30 March 2016 by VP/HR Federica Mogherini on the entry into office of the new Government of the Union of Myanmar,
- having regard to the statement of 2 December 2016 by the spokesperson of the VP/HR on the recent escalation of violence in Myanmar, and to the statement of 6 September 2017 by the VP/HR on the situation in Rakhine State,
- having regard to the joint press release of 25 November 2016 on the third EU-Myanmar Human Rights Dialogue,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 4 December 2015 on statelessness,
- having regard to the recent briefings of the Office of the United Nations High

¹ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0316.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0506.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2017)0089.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2017)0247.

Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar of 29 and 18 November 2016 respectively, on the deteriorating human rights situation in northern Rakhine State,

- having regard to the OHCHR report entitled ‘Situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar’, of 20 June 2016 and to the report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar of 18 March 2016,
 - having regard to the 1951 UN Convention on the Status of Refugees and to the 1967 Protocol thereto,
 - having regard to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and to the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness,
 - having regard to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) Global 2014-24 Action Plan to End Statelessness of November 2014,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948,
 - having regard to the end-of-mission statement of 20 January 2017 by the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Yanghee Lee, concluding that ‘the situation is now worse than at any point in the past few years’,
 - having regard to the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State of August 2017,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 and to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966,
 - having regard to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Charter,
 - having regard to Rules 135(5) and 123(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, according to the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), more than 300 000 Muslim Rohingya fleeing violence in Rakhine State have sought refuge in Bangladesh over the past two weeks;
- B. whereas Rakhine State in Myanmar is home to approximately one million Rohingya, a predominantly Muslim minority group facing repression and continued serious human rights violations, including threats to life and security, denial of the rights to health and education, forced labour, sexual violence and limits to their political rights;
- C. whereas the Rohingya people have been officially stateless since the 1982 Burmese Citizenship Law was enacted, which has led to severe restrictions on freedom of movement and has confined them to camps;
- D. whereas a group of Rohingya insurgents staged an attack on police posts and an army base in Rakhine State on 25 August 2017; whereas this resulted in a significant military counteroffensive, with serious and large-scale human rights violations, including killings, rape and torture; whereas human rights organisations, notably Human Rights Watch, using satellite imagery, have reported large-scale destruction of homes and other buildings in parts of northern Rakhine State currently inaccessible to NGOs and

independent observers;

- E. whereas under the current Constitution of Myanmar the military retains autonomy from civilian oversight and extensive power over the government and national security;
 - F. whereas those fleeing Myanmar, many of whom are women and children, travel through treacherous routes, facing gun fire and dangerous paths, as well as starvation and a lack of medical assistance; whereas dozens have died en route; whereas Bangladesh Coast Guards personnel have found the bodies of at least 20 people fleeing;
 - G. whereas Bangladesh has lodged a complaint against the Myanmar authorities about the laying of landmines across a section of its border with Bangladesh which would prevent the return of Rohingya Muslims fleeing violence;
 - H. whereas the international staff members of the UN and international non-governmental organisations are prohibited from entering the areas affected by the conflict, and whereas UN agencies are unable to deliver humanitarian aid, including food, water and medicine to the Rohingya;
 - I. whereas on 10 September 2017 the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Raad Al Hussein, announced that the situation in Myanmar ‘seems a textbook example of ethnic cleansing’;
 - J. whereas China and Russia blocked the adoption of a statement by the UN Security Council on the situation of the Rohingya minority in Myanmar in March 2017;
1. Strongly condemns all the attacks in Rakhine State; is gravely concerned about the increasing gravity and scale of human rights violations, including killings, violent clashes, destruction of civilian property and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians;
 2. Strongly urges the military and security forces to immediately cease the killings, harassment and rape of the Rohingya people, and the burning of their homes;
 3. Recalls that the Myanmar authorities have a duty to protect, without discrimination, all civilians from abuse, and to investigate grievous human rights violations and prosecute those responsible, in accordance with human rights standards and obligations;
 4. Calls on the Myanmar authorities to grant immediate and unhindered access to independent monitors, international human rights organisations, journalists and other international observers, and the United Nations, notably the UN Fact-Finding Mission established by the UN Human Rights Council in March, with a view to ensuring independent and impartial investigations into allegations of serious human rights violations by all parties;
 5. Urgently calls for humanitarian aid organisations to be granted access to all conflict areas and displaced people, without discrimination, to allow aid workers to assist people in danger;
 6. Calls on the Government of Myanmar to immediately remove all landmines on the border with Bangladesh;

7. Urges the Government of Myanmar, and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi in particular, to condemn unequivocally all incitement to racial or religious hatred and to combat social discrimination and hostilities against the Rohingya minority; urges the Government of Myanmar, furthermore, to uphold the universal right to freedom of religion or belief; reminds the State Counsellor to push for the implementation of the recommendations given in the final report of the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, which was drawn up at her own request; deplores the dramatic deterioration of the situation since the statement of 18 May 2015 by the spokesperson of Ms Suu Kyi's party that the Government of Myanmar should restore citizenship to the Rohingya minority;
8. Reminds 1990 Sakharov Prize laureate Aung San Suu Kyi that the prize is awarded to those who defend human rights, safeguard the rights of minorities and respect international law, among other criteria; draws attention to the need to consider whether the Sakharov Prize could be revoked in cases where laureates violate those criteria after the prize has been awarded;
9. Acknowledges the effort by Bangladesh, in the face of this humanitarian catastrophe, to facilitate protection for hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees; strongly encourages the authorities of Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries to admit all those fleeing violence in Rakhine State, and to respect the principle of non-refoulement; calls on the Commission and the Member States to increase financial and material support for these refugees;
10. Recalls its recommendation that the governments of the countries dealing with the influx of Rohingya refugees cooperate closely with the UNHCR, which has the technical expertise to screen for refugee status and the mandate to protect refugees and stateless people; calls for the EU and UN to support Myanmar's neighbouring countries in this regard;
11. Calls furthermore on ASEAN and regional governments to take immediate action to increase pressure on the Myanmar Government to halt rights abuses, protect all civilians in Rakhine State and lend support to refugees fleeing;
12. Supports efforts to intensify a political process based on implementing the Annan recommendations; calls on the UN Security Council and General Assembly to adopt effective diplomatic and political measures to ensure compliance by the Government of Myanmar with its obligations vis-à-vis the Rohingya minority in terms of ensuring protection and access to aid; calls in this regard for a resolution of the UN General Assembly and Security Council condemning the rights abuses, insisting on access to Rakhine State and demanding accountability for the serious violations of international law by all parties; further calls for a resolution to be adopted at the September 2017 UN Human Rights Council extending the mandate of the Fact-Finding Mission;
13. Urges China and other international and regional actors to use all channels to demand an end to the atrocities and bring about a peaceful resolution;
14. Calls on the VP/HR and the EU Member States to significantly increase their pressure on the Myanmar Government and security forces to halt the rights abuses, to fully cooperate with UN investigators and international humanitarian agencies and to ensure accountability for grave violations of international law; calls in this regard for the

VP/HR and the EU Member States to take an active role in supporting immediate action at UN level and making clear that the EU stands ready to consider targeted punitive sanctions against individuals and entities, and to consider consequences in the context of the trade preferences Myanmar enjoys, should grave violations in international law continue with impunity;

15. Calls on the VP/HR to report back to Parliament on EU initiatives at the UN and in the context of the EU Foreign Affairs Council;
16. Calls for the EU and its Member States to welcome reporting and statements from Rohingya representatives on the situation on the ground;
17. Supports efforts to have independent and UN-led monitors on the ground to alleviate the humanitarian crisis; calls on the Myanmar authorities to grant immediate and unhindered access to independent monitors, notably the UN Fact-Finding Mission established by the UN Human Rights Council in March 2017;
18. Supports the establishment of an office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Myanmar with a full mandate;
19. Calls for the EU and its Member States to support the UNHCR Global 2014-24 Action Plan to End Statelessness;
20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Government and Parliament of Myanmar, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the EU Member States, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN Human Rights Council.