



Plenary sitting

B9-0175/2021

8.3.2021

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 Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising
(2021/2576(RSP))

**Lars Patrick Berg, Thierry Mariani, Jaak Madison, Jérôme Rivière,
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on behalf of the ID Group

B9-0175/2021

European Parliament resolution on the Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising (2021/2576(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the United Nations Security Council resolutions on Syria,
 - having regard to its earlier resolutions on Syria,
 - having regard to the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) of 16 March 2021 entitled ‘the Syrian conflict – 10 years after the uprising’,
 - having regard to the declaration of the VP/HR of 9 October 2019 on recent developments in north-east Syria,
 - having regard to the sanctions regime against Syria imposed by the Council, which has been extended until 1 June 2021,
 - having regard to the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the conflict in Syria has claimed several hundred thousand lives and has led to the exile of several million Syrians from their country or from areas relatively untouched by the conflict; whereas the United Nations World Food Programme considers that 12.4 million people are currently food-insecure in Syria;
- B. whereas the Syrian Government has the international *erga omnes* obligation to protect its citizens;
- C. whereas EUR 1.135 billion has been paid to Jordan and Lebanon since the beginning of the Syrian conflict to help them to cope with the massive influx of refugees from Syria;
- D. whereas the peace processes initiated by the United Nations have broken down; whereas the European External Action Service and the EU’s attempted mediation of the conflict, as in other cases, has not improved the situation in the country or region; whereas interference by other states has further exacerbated the conflict; whereas the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Syria has to be respected;
- E. whereas the conflict in Syria has contributed to the acceleration of the spread of radical Islam; whereas jihadist groups in Syria account for almost all of the armed fighters opposing the Syrian Government;
- F. whereas the conflict in Syria is one of the main causes of the migrant crisis that the EU Member States are currently experiencing; whereas more than EUR 6 billion have been paid by the European Union to Turkey in the framework of the EU-Turkey Statement of 18 March 2016; whereas the limit of 72 000 migrants admitted to stay in the European

Union under the EU-Turkey Statement has been greatly exceeded and whereas this agreement mainly benefits Turkey;

- G. whereas Lebanon is currently hosting one and a half million Syrian refugees, a number that corresponds to a quarter of its population; whereas the current crisis in Lebanon has been amplified considerably by the conflict in Syria and its consequences;
- H. whereas Denmark, having determined that Damascus and its surrounding areas are now safe to inhabit, is the first Member State to have told Syrian refugees that they must return home, and whereas it has decided to strip 94 Syrian refugees of their residency permits and organise their return home;
1. Expresses its deep concern about the ongoing conflict in Syria, in particular the loss of life resulting from the conflict;
 2. Further expresses concern regarding the unprecedented situation of poverty and food insecurity in Syria, where almost 60 % of the population is currently living without regular access to safe and nutritious food; is concerned that there is a concrete risk of the sanctions further impoverishing the Syrian people, which may result in the subsequent radicalisation of a large part of the most fragile populations;
 3. Reminds the Syrian Government of its obligation to protect its citizens; emphasises that the will of the Syrian people has to be respected; draws particular attention to the plight of persecuted Christians and calls for those responsible for the crimes committed against Christians to be held accountable;
 4. Recalls that 3.6 million Syrian refugees are still living in Turkey, meaning that there is a constant threat of illegal migratory flows to the EU; draws the attention of the Member States to the large number of Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries (more than 5.5 million) a large proportion of whom are living in Lebanon, a country already hit by an economic crisis;
 5. Insists on a policy of regional placement of refugees, which would allow them to return home and rebuild once the conflict has been resolved; condemns the creation of any pull factors that could trigger new migration flows from this region to the EU;
 6. Considers that many Syrian refugees living in the EU could now return to their home country, as vast areas of Syria can be considered safe;
 7. Deplores the fact that Syria has become a training camp for international jihadism; recalls the testimony of the French doctor Jacques Bérès, who in August 2012 reported the presence of jihadist fighters of all nationalities in Aleppo claiming to be members of al-Qaeda; recalls that the Syrian rebels of the Free Syrian Army and the Syrian National Army are directly linked to the jihadist groups the al-Nusra Front, Ahrar al-Sham and Hayat Tahrir al-Sham; notes that the al-Nusra Front, which was formed during the Syrian civil war and was directly linked to Islamic State, later became the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda;
 8. Denounces the role of Turkey as an objective supporter of jihadist rebels, who have been used as mercenaries in Syria against the Kurds, in Libya and more recently in

Nagorno-Karabakh;

9. Strongly denounces the fact that international aid has been received by jihadist groups;
10. Expresses its concern that female nationals of EU Member States who joined the ranks of Islamic State and are now detained in camps in north-eastern Syria are attempting to assert a right to be repatriated together with their children;
11. Emphasises that the current crisis has been exacerbated by interference by a number of foreign states fighting proxy wars in Syria; considers that Syria is a victim of international geopolitical confrontations and interference by foreign states that had nothing to do with the situation in 2011; considers it hypocritical to pretend to help Syrians while denying them the right to turn the page on this war;
12. 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 European External Action Service, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government of Syria.