

P6_TA(2006)0358

The situation in Zimbabwe

European Parliament resolution on the situation in Zimbabwe

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolutions of 15 January 2004¹, 16 December 2004² and 7 July 2005³,
 - having regard to Council Common Position 2006/51/CFSP of 30 January 2006 renewing restrictive measures against Zimbabwe until 20 February 2007⁴,
 - having regard to Commission Regulation (EC) No 898/2005⁵ of 15 June 2005 extending the list of those persons in Zimbabwe targeted by the restrictive measures,
 - having regard to the International Crisis Group's report of 24 August 2006, 'Zimbabwe: An Opposition Strategy',
 - having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the appalling humanitarian, political, and economic situation in Zimbabwe continues to deteriorate, with the so-called Operation Murambatsvina (drive out rubbish) leaving 700 000 people destitute, with over 4 million Zimbabweans at risk of starvation and surviving on food aid, and political repression continuing apace,
- B. whereas the Zimbabwean Government has proposed the Interception of Communications Bill, which will allow the military, intelligence services, police and the office of the President to monitor e-mail correspondence, Internet access and telephone conversations,
- C. whereas the Senate elections of 26 November 2005 were a cynical act of political patronage designed to consolidate Zanu-PF's authoritarian grip on Zimbabwe,
- D. whereas the main political opposition in Zimbabwe, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), regrettably split into two factions in October 2005,
- E. whereas the development of Africa is a priority for Western democracies; recognising, however, that aid alone can achieve little and that African governments are expected to deliver their side of the bargain through a commitment to democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights,
- F. whereas Zimbabweans suffer from an unemployment rate of over 70 per cent and the highest inflation rate in the world,

¹ OJ C 92 E, 16.4.2004, p. 417.

² OJ C 226 E, 15.9.2005, p. 358.

³ OJ C 157 E, 6.7.2006, p. 491.

⁴ OJ L 26, 31.1.2006, p. 28.

⁵ OJ L 153, 16.6.2005, p. 9.

- G. concerned at reports by human rights organisations that migrants from Zimbabwe are vulnerable to mistreatment and abuse in South Africa,
- H. whereas the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and, in particular, South Africa have failed to take a strong enough stand against the reprehensible Mugabe regime,
1. Condemns the Mugabe dictatorship for its relentless oppression of the Zimbabwean people and expresses its profound disappointment at the refusal of regional actors such as the AU, the SADC and South Africa to take a more robust stance against the regime's abuses and the failure to insist that the Zimbabwean Government should mend its ways and restore democracy and the rule of law;
 2. Demands that the Mugabe regime fulfil its pledge to provide housing sufficient for all those forced out of their homes during the atrocious Operation Murambatsvina campaign;
 3. Regrets that Zimbabwe's progress in the fight against HIV-AIDS is being undermined by the government's abusive practices such as its eviction programme, which has disrupted access to healthcare, and inadequate social welfare policies, which have further heightened the vulnerability of AIDS patients;
 4. Notes with great concern that Zimbabwe is currently experiencing one of the world's worst HIV-AIDS epidemics, with over 3 200 people a week dying from the disease; calls for the Zimbabwean Government to take urgent action to improve access to anti-retroviral treatment, which is currently received by only 8% of those infected with the disease;
 5. Refuses to recognise the legitimacy of the recently created Senate in Zimbabwe because a mere 15 % of Zimbabweans participated in the discredited election process, the result of which was also guaranteed beforehand to favour Zanu-PF;
 6. Calls for the withdrawal of the Interception of Communications Bill, the Suppression of Terrorism Bill and the Non-Governmental Organisations Bill, all of which are likely to be used as pretexts for even tougher crackdowns on any opponent of the Mugabe regime;
 7. Expresses great consternation at the Mugabe regime's covert attempts to take control of the Zimbabwe Red Cross Society (ZRCS) by forcibly recommending the employment of regime members and supporters; notes that the ZRCS's largest donors are Denmark, the UK and other Member States; is fearful that this move will herald the use of ZRCS food support as a political weapon, thus depriving many vulnerable Zimbabweans of vital assistance;
 8. Strongly insists that the Mugabe regime must derive absolutely no financial benefit or propaganda value from either the run-up to the 2010 World Cup or the tournament itself; in this regard, calls on South Africa, the host nation, and on FIFA, to exclude Zimbabwe from participating in pre-World Cup matches, holding international friendly games, or hosting national teams involved in the event;
 9. Calls on Robert Mugabe to comply with his own promise to stand down, sooner rather than later, which would be the largest single step possible towards reviving Zimbabwean society, politics and economy, and for the commencement of positive transitional negotiations between Zanu-PF, MDC parties and other opposition movements;

10. Welcomes the meeting that took place between the two MDC factions in South Africa on 26 August 2006 and calls upon all those opposed to the deplorable Mugabe regime to come together and to ensure that their activities provide the people of Zimbabwe with a firmly democratic, representative and united opposition, ready in all respects to assume the responsibilities of government, and to bring about political and economic change for the better in Zimbabwe;
11. Applauds the Zimbabwean Congress of Trade Unions for its forthcoming protests against the appalling living conditions imposed on the people of Zimbabwe by the Mugabe regime and insists that such demonstrations should be allowed to proceed without police harassment;
12. Recognises that the EU's targeted sanctions against both Zimbabwe and certain individuals in Zimbabwe have failed to have the desired impact on those directly responsible for the impoverishment of Zimbabwe and the hardships endured by its people; calls on the Council to ensure that all Member States rigorously apply existing restrictive measures, including the arms embargo and the travel ban, erring on the side of exclusion rather than permissiveness;
13. Further calls on the Council to expand the scope of the sanctions and further to enlarge the list of individuals – which currently stands at 120 – so that it encompasses many more Zimbabwean government ministers, deputies and governors, Zanu-PF members, supporters and workers, in addition to their family members, and businessmen and other prominent individuals associated with Zanu-PF;
14. Calls on China and other countries that continue to supply weaponry and other support to the Mugabe regime to desist from this and to join the international community in its efforts to bring about change for the better in Zimbabwe;
15. Deplores the fact that at the same time as the United Nations is appealing for USD 257 million in humanitarian aid for Zimbabwe, the Mugabe regime has completed the USD 240 million procurement of twelve K-8 military aircraft from China; notes also that the Zimbabwean army has announced the purchase of 127 vehicles for senior officers, with another 194 to be purchased in coming months;
16. Urges the UN Security Council to report on the human rights and political situation in Zimbabwe as a matter of urgency;
17. Reiterates its demand for the SADC to close its regional peacekeeping training centre in Harare and relocate it within the territory of another SADC member state;
18. Insists that all aid destined for Zimbabwe must be delivered through genuine non-governmental organisations and must reach the people for whom it is intended, with the least possible involvement of the Mugabe regime; expresses unease that the EU funded seven projects in Zimbabwe in 2005 at a cost of EUR 70 million, and further projects in 2006, including EUR 3.7 million through the EU Water Facility, and asks the Commission to give its assurances that none of the aid benefited the Mugabe regime;

19. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the governments of the G8 countries, the governments and parliaments of Zimbabwe and South Africa, the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Chairmen of the Commission and Executive Council of the AU, the Panafrican Parliament, the Secretary-General of the SADC, and the President of FIFA.