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DRC and rape as a weapon of war

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

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on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the United Nations Security Council Resolution (1325) on Women, Peace and Security of 31 October 2000,

- having regard to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women of 20 December 1993, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, of 20 November 1999,

- having regard to the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court adopted in 1998, and particularly Articles 7 and 8 thereof, which rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and forced sterilisation or any form of sexual violence as crimes against humanity and war crimes and equate them with a form of torture and a serious war crime, whether these acts are systematically perpetrated or not during international or internal conflicts,

- having regard to Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

- whereas the war and unrest in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has resulted in widespread and alarming scale of sexual violence against women committed by armed rebel groups as well as by government army and police forces,

- whereas in 2005 alone there were more than 40,000 reported rapes or other sexual assaults in DRC and the South Kivu Provincial Synergie on Sexual Violence, a body bringing together the DRC Government, UN and civil society representatives, has recorded 4 500 sexual violence cases in the first six months of 2007,

- whereas rape and other forms of sexual violence have become endemic, whereas it is impossible to establish with any degree of accuracy the exact numbers of women and girls – of all ages – who have been affected by sexual violence,

- whereas, according to the UN special representative, atrocities against women are structured around rape, gang rape, sexual slavery and murder, which have far-reaching consequences such as the physical and psychological destruction of women,

- whereas sexual violence leaves survivors with serious health problems such as fistulae and sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS,

- whereas many rape victims are re-victimized because they are rejected by their own families and communities while the perpetrators enjoy impunity,

- whereas violence against women amounts to war crimes and crimes against humanity and all perpetrators should be brought to justice to end impunity,

1. Condemns all acts of sexual abuse and exploitation as well as other forms of criminal acts carried out by government forces, rebel groups or other forces in violation of basic human rights;

2. Calls on the Government of the DRC to put an end to impunity and implement the new law adopted by its parliament outlawing sexual violence, which foresees tougher penalties against perpetrators;

3. Calls on all warring factions in DRC to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender based violence, particularly rape and all forms sexual violence;

4. Recalls that the UN Security Council 1325 resolution emphasizes the responsibility of all states to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes, including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls;

5. Calls on the DRC Government to bring to court those individuals who have committed sexual abuses and demands that the Commission assist the DRC Government in putting an end to impunity;

6. Calls on the EU and the UN to recognise rape as a crime against humanity;

7. Demands that the mandate of the MONUC with respect to the protection of civilians against sexual violence to be strengthened;

8. Calls on the EU, the UN and the African Union to take all necessary steps to create truly effective monitoring and documenting sexual violence in DRC;

9. Calls on the EU to allocate substantial funds to provide medical, legal and social support for victims of sexual abuse and empower women and girls as a way to prevent further sexual abuse;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the DRC Government, the Council, the Commission, the president of AU and the UN Secretary-General.

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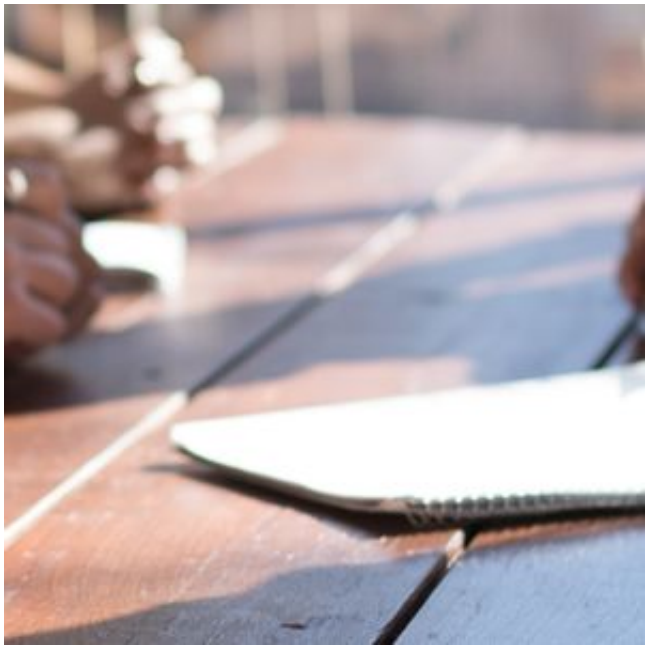
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