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Situation of Burmese refugees in Thailand

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

Tabled by ***Frithjof Schmidt, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Hélène Flautre***

on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

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

A. whereas the Thai navy reportedly intercepted 992 Rohinga and Bangladeshi boat-people in Thai "territorial waters" in the Andaman sea between 18 and 30 December 2008,

B. whereas, according to reports, the navy bound the refugees' hands, removed the boats' engines and towed the refugees into the high sea, where they were abandoned to die,

C. whereas 500 are now reported missing, some were rescued by Indonesian and Indian coastguards,

D. whereas Rohingas have been rendered stateless by the Burmese authorities, and are victims of systematic, persistent and widespread human rights violations in Burma, such as:

- - denial of citizenship rights
- - severe restrictions on freedom of movement, education, marriage and religion
- - forced labour, rape, land confiscation, arbitary arrests, torture, extrajudicial killings and extortion on a daily basis,

E. whereas, since 1948, 1,5 million Rohingas have been expelled or had to flee from Arakan,

- 1. Expresses its general concern about the situation of the Rohinga population;
- 2. Welcomes the statement of Thailand's Prime Minister, H.E. Abkisit Vejjajiva, that the boat-people incident will be investigated;
- 3. Calls on the countries concerned to treat the boat-people humanely and not to push them back to Burma where their lives might be in danger;
- 4. Calls for an impartial inquiry into the incident and the prosecution of those responsible;
- 5. Calls for the UNHCR to be granted access to Rohinga refugees in custody;

- 6. Appeals to the members of ASEAN and notably the Thai chair to work on a permanent solution to the long-standing problem;

- 7. Calls above all on the Burmese Government to restore citizenship, to lift restrictions on the right to education, to get married, and to move freely, to stop religious persecution, destruction of mosques, churches and places of worship, free the political prisoners and to start an inclusive democratic process;

- 8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the government of Thailand, the governments of the ASEAN nations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

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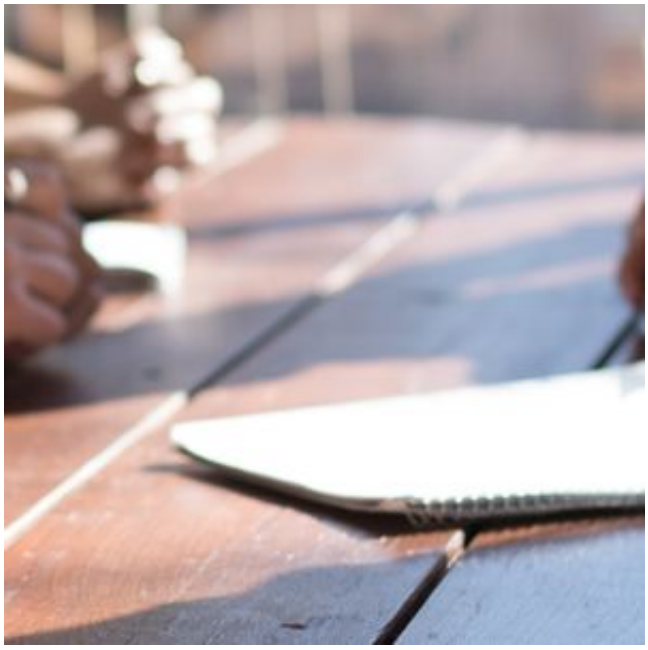

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