

## **P6\_TA-PROV(2006)0017**

### **Afghanistan**

#### **European Parliament resolution on Afghanistan**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Afghanistan,
  - having regard to the new Parliament inaugurated in Afghanistan on 19 December 2005, following elections held on 18 September 2005,
  - having regard to the de facto conclusion, with the election of a National Assembly, of the process launched by the Bonn Agreement of 5 December 2001,
  - having regard to the election of Provincial Councils in all 34 provinces across the country,
  - having regard to the EU-Afghanistan Joint Declaration “Committing to a new EU-Afghan Partnership” signed in Strasbourg on 16 November 2005,
  - having regard to the opening of the international conference in London on 31 January 2006 aimed at establishing a post-Bonn Afghanistan Compact that will address the international community’s support with regard to security, governance and development challenges in Afghanistan,
  - having regard to Rule 103(4) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the adoption of a new Constitution in January 2004, the holding of presidential elections in October 2004 and of parliamentary and provincial elections in September 2005 – with the participation of millions of registered voters in both cases – were all important steps in a transition process designed to put in place more representative and democratic institutions in Afghanistan, thereby helping to bring about a peaceful and sustainable future for Afghanistan after a quarter of a century of conflict and oppression,
- B. whereas ensuring adequate levels of security is still a priority in Afghanistan, mainly in the southern and south-eastern provinces, which still require an international presence in order to fight terrorism and to restore peaceful conditions throughout the country,
- C. whereas gender discrimination, which reached unprecedented levels under the Taliban regime, remains an issue to be addressed urgently, including in relation to traditions such as house confinement and forced marriages,
- D. whereas the pervasive opium and heroin production in Afghanistan carries the risk of permanently affecting the nation’s politics, crippling its society and distorting a fragile economy while consolidating a corrupt narco-elite,
1. Expresses its sympathy to the Afghan people who, throughout the Bonn process and in particular on the occasion of both polls, demonstrated an extraordinary will in

overcoming the difficulties posed by a post-conflict situation and showed that they were committed to peace and democracy-building;

2. Welcomes the success of the recent elections which, taking into account their complexity and operational challenges as reported also by the European Union Election Observation Mission, were an extraordinary accomplishment; deplores, however, the fact that eight candidates were killed during the electoral process along with a number of election workers, clerics and others, and that the EU Election Observation Mission reported irregularities and fraud in a number of provinces;
3. Welcomes the fact that female candidates accounted for some 10% of the total number of candidates and that thanks to the female reserve seat system women obtained 27.3% of the seats in the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House) and almost 30% in the Provincial Councils; believes that the electoral law should be clarified to ensure that reserve seats represent a minimum and not a maximum number of the seats available for women;
4. Believes that, following these elections, the Afghan authorities as a whole – but namely the Office of the President, the Government, the National Assembly and the Provincial Councils – emerge with full popular legitimacy and that the Afghan people's expectations must now be met by good and accountable governance, starting with the adoption of sustainable reforms aimed at improving people's quality of life as well as of credible measures favouring gender and ethnic equality;
5. Considers that Afghanistan, having completed this process, is now an important country in the region as a whole in terms of democratisation, and therefore calls on the international aid community, and in particular on the participants in the London Conference, to duly take this factor into consideration;
6. Underlines, given the urgent needs of the Afghan population, the importance of streamlining coordination amongst donors, including a reduction of time-consuming procedures; calls, therefore, on the United Nations to lead such coordination and calls on the Council and the Commission to ensure that Member States work together with a common approach so as to better serve the interests of Afghan people;
7. Considers that in our future partnership with Afghanistan a stronger emphasis must be placed on the concept of Afghan 'ownership' and on giving greater responsibility to the Afghan authorities and civil society for making strategic choices for the development of their country, and that the EU should link aid more explicitly to performance, in particular to good governance, respect for human rights and sound financial management of projects;
8. Insists on greater visibility of EU funding, given that the EU is the second biggest donor in Afghanistan, and demands that international organisations which administer projects co-funded by the EU be more transparent as regards the sources of their funds; is of the opinion that the Parliament should make a direct and concrete contribution by providing training opportunities for parliamentary officials and parliamentarians;
9. Agrees with the need to define a 'post-Bonn process' and supports the holding of a donors' conference to be hosted by the UN in London in January 2006 in order to assess the political and financial support needed for the interim 'Afghanistan National Development

Strategy' that the Afghan government will submit; considers that this strategy should emphasise sustainability and specific targets, such as:

- respect for human rights, and in particular women's rights, and the rule of law;
  - governance and institution-building, and in particular a functioning administration, an independent judiciary able to act against widespread corruption and a well-trained police force, given that the stability of Afghanistan is nowadays threatened more from the inside than from the outside;
  - the creation of a system of checks and balances to define the roles and powers of each institution and the promotion of political pluralism;
10. Affirms the need to deal with Afghanistan within a regional framework; calls, therefore, on the Council and the Commission to develop a policy for stability and democracy in the region;
  11. Welcomes, in this regard, the fact that Afghanistan has recently joined the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and, within such a regional framework, urges all neighbouring countries to refrain from any interference in Afghan sovereignty;
  12. Considers it appropriate to establish, within the European Parliament, a delegation for relations with the Afghan Parliament in order to be able to have a positive influence on the democratisation process in Afghanistan;
  13. Calls on the Commission, in order to aid and step up cooperation with Afghanistan, to study the advisability of concluding an EU-Afghanistan Association Agreement;
  14. Condemns all terrorist acts against the civilian population, the police forces, domestic aid workers and international troops, and congratulates the Afghan people, in particular Afghan women, who defied intimidation and threats in order to participate in the electoral process, either as candidates, electoral staff, local observers or voters;
  15. Reaffirms the need for the Afghan authorities, in cooperation with international troops operating in the country, to continue to fight terrorism and to put an end to factionalism;
  16. Welcomes the possible expansion of the International Security Assistance Force in the country, including to the southern provinces, and supports a single – or more integrated – command structure for all operations by international forces in Afghanistan; calls for a solution to the problem of the so-called caveats which impede proper cooperation among the different national contingents in the country;
  17. Condemns the transfer of hundreds of men captured by US troops after the invasion of Afghanistan in 2002 to the illegal Guantánamo detention centre, where torture and other ill-treatment by US personnel have, according to numerous testimonies, been commonplace occurrences, and calls for its immediate closure;
  18. Expresses its belief that popular support is essential for a successful outcome in the fight against terrorism; calls, therefore, on NATO and on Coalition forces to review rules of engagement and all measures that might improve both security standards and the level of

protection of the civilian population affected by military action in combat areas, and to fully respect the Geneva Convention; calls on the USA to close any secret 'dark' prison in the country;

19. Expresses deep concern about illegal drug production – as highlighted by the recent Afghan Opium Survey 2005 carried out by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime and in particular the latest statistics on domestic heroin consumption – which could lead to an HIV/AIDS emergency in the region;
20. Draws attention to the extremely high costs and serious flaws in terms of effectiveness of a counter-narcotics strategy based only on eradication and alternative livelihood and calls on the participants in the above mentioned London Conference to take into consideration the proposal of licensed production of opium for medical purposes, as already granted to a number of countries;
21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Chair of the London Conference, the government and Parliament of Afghanistan, the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and of SAARC, and the governments of the USA, all SAARC countries, Russia, Iran, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and China.