

Tuesday, 14 September 2004 - Strasbourg

Humanitarian situation in Sudan

Gomes (PSE). - (PT) Mr President, the Darfur humanitarian crisis has political origins. The people of Darfur have been involved in an uprising, not for separatist claims, but against the under-development and political and economic marginalisation to which they have been subjected by Khartoum, which has been fomenting inter-ethnic conflict since the 1980s. We are not dealing with a government that is reluctant to carry out its responsibilities, but with a dictatorial government that spends over half of the State budget on 'Migs' and other military supplies, and does not invest the profits from oil in helping the Sudanese people. It is a regime that is accustomed to living with sanctions, adept at exploiting the rivalries within the international community and capable of mobilising countries to which it sells oil or from which it purchases arms, such as China and Pakistan, under the protection of the Security Council. It is a government that realises that there is no political will, when permanent members of the Security Council use words like genocide to describe what is happening in Darfur and do not act immediately with adequate resources to stop it with anything more than words. The Sudanese Government is therefore only partly meeting its obligations under Resolution 1556, but has not met the key obligation, which is to put an end to the war that it is waging on its people in Darfur.

The African Union is undertaking a mission that is worthy of the European Union's praise and support. More must be done as regards logistical and military capability; more needs to be done to assist coordination between the African Union and the United Nations; more needs to be done in terms of the rapid support provided to the humanitarian organisations and to the humanitarian agencies on the ground. It is essential that we increase the international presence on the ground, with both African Union ceasefire monitors and peace-keeping forces, and the humanitarian agencies, human rights monitors and an international police force. There must also be a clear mandate from the Security Council to protect the civil population at risk. This is what all of the refugees and displaced persons with whom Parliament's mission spoke asked us to do. EU governments both inside and outside the Security Council have a particular responsibility to deliver a coherent message to the Sudanese Government, which, at its core, is weak, ridden with rivalries, dictatorial and corrupt. If Parliament and European governments think that the situation 'amounts to genocide', then the very least that they can do is recommend an arms embargo and an oil embargo. This is the only language that the Sudanese Government understands. The EU and the entire international community must demand that the ceasefire be enforced and must demand that the present agreement be extended to all regions.