

Algeria

The Congress of the ELDR Party meeting in Brussels.

A. Shocked by reports, confirmed by the Algerian Government, that nearly 400 civilians were massacred in the last week by terrorists;

B. Appealed by the massacre, which took place in village of Rais, located about 25 km south of the capital and close to its airport, where 256 victims were killed;

C. Shocked by the brutality of those massacres, which doesn't seem to have precedents in the history of terrorism;

D. Whereas five years of massacres in Algeria have killed more than 60.000 people, which shows that there is no military solution to the conflict;

E. Whereas the Algerian authorities placed the former leader of the integrationist and banned Islamic group FIS, Mr Abessi Madeni under house arrest after he urged the United Nations in an open letter to "open a serious dialogue" to end the violence that has taken more than 60.000 lives;

F. Whereas Mr Madeni was freed from jail on July 15th after six years in prison;

G. Whereas the recent legislative election and the constitution of the new government have failed to offer the possibility of genuine dialogue between the different sections of Algerian society;

H. Concerned by the remarks by the Algerian authorities, who persist in considering that the terrorist violence is only "residual";

I. Concerned by that police and army operations aimed at reducing terrorist activity never involved the taking of prisoners and that security forces systematically fail in defending attacked villages;

1. Concerned by the strong denunciations made by Amnesty International, Reporters sans Frontières and other organisations defending human rights, of the systematic violations of human rights carried out by the Algerian authorities;

K. Whereas the negotiations for the Euro-Mediterranean Agreement between the EU and Algeria began on 4th March in Brussels,

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L Recalling the deep historical and cultural links between the Algerian people and Europeans;

1. Strongly condemns the terrorist attacks against the civil population in Algeria and expresses its solidarity to the people of Algeria;

2. Is of the opinion that a true national dialogue and real democratisation are necessary in order to bring an end to the continuing reign of violence in Algeria,

3. Considers that the State's response should not be limited to the "eradication" of terrorism, a policy which proves to fail, but should include a major political initiative aimed at bringing the country to peace;

4. Urges the Algerian authorities to launch an initiative for dialogue involving civil society and all political parties including the FIS and hard line Islamic movements, with the aim of reaching a broad agreement on the rejection of violence, respect for human rights and freedom of the media, a commitment to the regular holding of democratic elections and respect for cultural minorities;

5. Considers that the fight against political terrorism by the authorities must be conducted by legal means with respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including respect for the freedom of the press;

6. Calls on the Algerian authorities to take measures to protect the civilian population from attacks, to bring to justice those responsible for the violent crimes committed and not to threaten human rights activists;

7. Believes that the framework of the negotiations of the new Euro-Mediterranean Agreement with Algeria should constitute a privileged possibility to launch an EU political initiative towards Algeria;

8. Calls on the Commission to link development of the democratisation process, stability and respect for human rights to the negotiations of the new agreement with Algeria;

9. Calls on the Commission to support measures and projects which promote the situation of women and freedom of the media in Algeria as a matter of priority;

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