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NATO Parliamentary Assembly

RESOLUTION 441

on

TACKLING CHALLENGES FROM THE SOUTH*

The Assembly,

1. **Acknowledging** the need to address the underlying causes of displacement and migratory flows such as conflicts and crises around the world;
2. **Deeply concerned** by the continuing conflicts in Syria and Iraq which have triggered a devastating humanitarian crisis with severe repercussions for regional and global security and stability;
3. **Noting** that Russia's indiscriminate air strikes encourage further radicalisation and exacerbate the humanitarian crisis and have helped the Assad regime consolidate power;
4. **Welcoming** Daesh's defeats on the battlefield which limit its ability to attract and recruit foreign fighters, but **stressing** that battlefield victories over the terror organisation will not solve the underlying problems of extremism, underdevelopment and sectarian conflicts in Syria, Iraq and the wider Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region;
5. **Emphasising** the complexity of the underlying causes that promote conflict and insecurity on NATO's southern flank, including, among others, acute food and water crises as a result of environmental problems, a youth bulge and hyper-urbanisation, lack of social and economic opportunities which facilitate radicalisation and all kinds of extremism, and weak state institutions;
6. **Concerned** that extremist militant groups will rise again if the underlying causes that facilitated their evolution are not addressed;
7. **Noting** that the conflicts in Syria and Iraq also threaten stability in North Africa, particularly in Libya, Tunisia and Egypt;

* Presented by the Political Committee and adopted by the Plenary Assembly on Monday 9 October 2017, Bucharest, Romania

8. ***Underlining*** the need for improved situational awareness regarding the linkage between political, economic and security developments in parts of sub-Saharan Africa and instability in the MENA region;
9. ***Gravely concerned*** about the conflict in Yemen, which has triggered an unprecedented humanitarian crisis aggravated by severe food shortages and a cholera outbreak;
10. ***Concerned*** about the negative effect of the diplomatic crisis between several Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and Qatar on the fight against Daesh and ***regretting*** that the crisis disrupts practical cooperation with NATO;
11. **URGES** member governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance and NATO partners:
 - a. to apply determined diplomatic pressure on the regime of Bashar al-Assad and its allies, including the Russian Federation and the Islamic Republic of Iran, to engage in meaningful negotiations that aim at achieving a lasting solution to the civil war which includes all responsible stakeholders in the country;
 - b. to support the efforts to find a political solution to the Syrian conflict in accordance with the road map stipulated by UN Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015);
 - c. to increase humanitarian aid to the people affected by the conflicts in Syria and Iraq, and assistance to recipient countries in Syria's immediate neighbourhood that host the vast majority of Syrian refugees;
 - d. to address the underlying causes and drivers of conflict in the Middle East and North Africa by increasing investments in humanitarian aid, governance reforms and economic development in the region;
 - e. to continue the fight against Daesh in Iraq and Syria while deepening cooperation among NATO partner countries, particularly those that are parties to the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative (ICI) and the Mediterranean Dialogue (MD);
 - f. to support initiatives that help de-escalate the diplomatic crisis between several GCC countries and Qatar, and re-establish unity of purpose in fighting Daesh;
 - g. to develop a comprehensive strategy for supporting stability in the Alliance's southern neighbourhood that also evaluates the deepening of relations, and the building of new ones, with other international actors such as the African Union, the Arab League, and others;
 - h. to sustain and, where necessary and possible, increase financial and technical support to partners in the Middle East and North Africa to help them modernise their defence establishments and military forces;
 - i. to improve situational awareness and coordinate efforts and activities on NATO's southern flank by enhancing dialogue and information sharing between the Alliance and partner countries, particularly with the partners of the ICI and the MD;
 - j. to encourage partner countries of the MD and the ICI to work to foster interethnic and inter-sectarian reconciliation and to pursue an inclusive political process;

- k. to improve NATO-EU cooperation in the South in areas such as maritime security in the Mediterranean, and to harmonise and coordinate the development of defence capabilities to ensure greater effectiveness in countering hybrid threats.
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