Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 1050 (1994)[1]

Rwanda and the prevention of humanitarian crises

Parliamentary Assembly

1. With reference to the Council of Europe's mandate to protect human rights and democratic principles, the Assembly observes that these rights and principles transcend the boundaries of Europe and should be seen in a context of worldwide interdependence and solidarity, in conformity with the declaration of the Committee of Ministers of 5 May 1989 on the future role of the Council of Europe in European construction and with the Vienna Declaration of 9 October 1993

2. Adopting this global perspective, the Assembly regrets that the international community has been unable to prevent the massacres in Rwanda. It does, however, appreciate the commitment of a number of countries which, acting on the basis of a United Nations mandate, have helped or are helping to protect the civilian population and provide humanitarian assistance.

3. The Assembly expresses its great respect to both governmental and non-governmental organisations for the exemplary work they are doing on the spot, in conditions which are as difficult as they are dangerous.

4. The Assembly welcomes the holding of the international Conference on Rwanda in its regional context: human rights, reconciliation and rehabilitation (The Hague, 16-17 September 1994), and supports The Hague Appeal adopted at the end of the conference. It considers that in order to make this Aappeal effective, follow-up measures, of which it asks to be informed, should be adopted as soon as possible.

5. The Assembly considers that the Council of Europe, particularly through its North-South Centre in Lisbon, should step up its links with the countries of Africa in order to strengthen its partnership with Africa and help to ensure respect for human rights that continent. In this context the Assembly refers to the texts it has already adopted on this subject, namely Recommendation 962 (1983), Recommendation 1062 (1987) and Order No. 434 (1987), Resolution 928 (1989), Resolution 981 (1992) and Resolution 1006 (1993), and regrets that appropriate action to follow up its proposals has not been taken.

6. The Parliamentary Assembly therefore:

6.1. asks the Government of Rwanda:

a. to guarantee the safety of the refugees who return to the country, to prevent any act of revenge against them and to take any necessary steps to restore confidence to the population;

b. to enter into national political discussions with a view to setting up a democratic and pluralist system of government, obtaining, if possible, the agreement of the different ethnic groups;

c. to encourage the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to continue to visit the places of detention of prisoners of war and police stations, and to allow international observers to visit other places of detention;

6.2. appeals to the member states of the Council of Europe to use their influence within the United Nations Security Council with a view to:

a. setting up machinery making possible rapid and effective intervention by a United Nations force to prevent humanitarian crises;

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1. SeeDoc. 7191, report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Demography, rapporteur: Mr Flückiger. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 10 November 1994.

b. .setting up an international tribunal to try the perpetrators of the massacres and other crimes in Rwanda which violate international laws as defined in particular by the 1949 Geneva Conventions and the first additional Protocol of 1977;

c. revising the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide to make it possible for the perpetrators of genocide to be tried in countries other than those where they committed their crimes;

6.3. invites the member states of the Council of Europe to contribute, financially and/or in kind, alone or through international organisations:

a. to humanitarian assistance for Rwandan refugees and displaced persons and to their return to their homes;

b. to the deployment of an adequate number of international human rights observers in Rwanda;

c. to the defusing of antipersonnel land mines;

d. to the setting up and operation of family reunification networks;

e. to the reconstruction of Rwanda;

6.4. also invites the member states of the Council of Europe:

a. .to ratify, if they have not yet done so, the 1980 United Nations Convention on Conventional Weapons, and to support revision of Protocol II thereto where it relates to antipersonnel land mines, particularly with a view to making it compulsory for such mines to be fitted with self-destruct mechanisms;

b. to use their influence to ensure that a regional conference on Central Africa is held as soon as possible;

6.5. asks the member states of the Council of Europe to limit the supply of arms to this part of the world and in every case to submit to an open registration system;

6.6. asks the governments of countries which have camps for Rwandan refugees on their territory:

a. to ensure that the camps are fully demilitarised

b. to suppress the propagation of violence and hatred among the refugees;

c. to ensure the circulation of, and access to, information in the camps;

d. to ensure safe access to the camps by representatives of the humanitarian organisations;

e. to promote respect for human rights.