

23 November 2011

Dear Baroness Ashton,

As members of the Informal European Parliament Group for Democracy in Eritrea I like to address some urgent concerns to you directly in relation to Eritrea and the Horn.

The Human Rights situation in Eritrea is deteriorating and even though there has been an official request to deposit the writ for Dawit Isaak, no response has been received. I look forward to hear from you the latest information on this most urgent matter.

I understand that the Human Rights Dialogue with Eritrea will take place in Asmara on Thursday this week and I would hope that the matter of Dawit Isaak will be presented. There is concern that Dawit Isaak has not been seen alive and proof of his live and where-about must be given by the Eritrean authorities. Can you please confirm that the European Union will insist on this necessity during the dialogue?

In light of the deplorable human rights situation, is the European Commission / EEAS of the opinion that the aid programme with Eritrea needs to be stopped?

The refugee situation is deteriorating. CNN has made an appeal to address the issue of human traffickers in the Sinai desert to which many Eritrean refugees are victim. I would like to know what progress has been made in terms of the European Union taking up this issue with the Egyptian authorities. It has also been brought to my attention that the Egyptian authorities are planning to deport Eritreans back to Eritrea, where they are in immediate danger of imprisonment. Has the EU discussed this matter with the Egyptian authorities and what has been the outcome?

A refugee crisis is building in the region, with an increase of refugees in Djibouti, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia and Uganda, as well as Yemen and Israel. This impact also on the EU, as many refugees will hope to reach the European territory. Does the EU have a policy to coherently address this issue, also in light of the aggravating famine and drought crisis in the Horn of Africa which is an additional component driving refugees out of the region?

I would urge you to use the power of your services to develop a coherent and broad approach to address these issues in an integrated manner, in line with the recently adopted Horn Strategy Framework. I look forward to hearing from you on these urgent matters.

From the European Parliament we stand ready to assist in developing future perspectives that allow a coherent and integrated approach to address these pressing issues that are so close to our own borders to avoid a crisis situation,

Sincerely,

Judith SARGENTINI

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