



Plenary sitting

B8-0157/2016

27.1.2016

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the systematic mass murder of religious minorities by ISIS
(2016/2529(RSP))

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the systematic mass murder of religious minorities by ISIS
(2016/2529(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Iraq, Syria, Libya and Egypt, in particular those of 10 October 2013 on recent cases of violence and persecution against Christians, notably in Maaloula (Syria) and Peshawar (Pakistan) and the case of Pastor Saeed Abedini (Iran)¹, of 18 September 2014 on the situation in Iraq and Syria, and the IS offensive, including the persecution of minorities², of 12 February 2015 on the humanitarian crisis in Iraq and Syria, in particular in the IS context³, and of 12 March 2015 on recent attacks and abductions by ISIS /Daesh in the Middle East, notably of Assyrians⁴,
- having regard to the Council conclusions of 16 March 2015 on the EU Regional Strategy for Syria and Iraq as well as the ISIL/Daesh threat, of 20 October 2014 on the ISIL/Daesh crisis in Syria and Iraq, of 30 August 2014 on Iraq and Syria, of 14 April 2014 and 12 October 2015 on Syria, and of 15 August 2014 on Iraq,
- having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) on Iraq and Syria,
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief and the EU Guidelines on the promotion of compliance with international humanitarian law; having regard to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion and Belief of 1981,
- having regard to Council Decision 2003/335/JHA of 8 May 2003 on the investigation and prosecution of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes⁵; having regard to the statement by the Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide,
- having regard to the statement on behalf of the European Union by Stavros Lambrinidis, EU Special Representative for Human Rights, at the UN Security Council Open Debate on ‘The victims of attacks and abuses on ethnic or religious ground in the Middle East’, on 27 March 2015,
- having regard to the Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic, presented in the Human Rights Council on 13 August 2015,

¹ Texts adopted, P7_TA(2013)0422.

² Texts adopted, P8_TA(2014)0027.

³ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0040.

⁴ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2015)0071.

⁵ OJ L 118, 14.5.2003, p. 12.

in particular its paragraphs 165 to 173,

- having regard to UN Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015), endorsing a road map for the peace process in Syria and setting a timetable for talks,
 - having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, as recognised by UN Security Council Resolution 2249 (2015), the violent extremist ideology of the so-called ‘ISIS/Daesh’, its terrorist acts, its continued gross systematic and widespread attacks directed against civilians, abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law, including those perpetrated on religious or ethnic ground, its eradication of cultural heritage and trafficking of cultural property, constitute a global and unprecedented threat to international peace and security;
- B. whereas the United Nations and other international organisations have reported widespread serious violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law committed by ISIS/Daesh and associated groups in the Middle East, especially in Syria and Iraq, against ethnic and religious minorities, including targeted killings, forced conversions, abductions, the selling of women, slavery of women and children, recruitment of children for suicide bombings, sexual and physical abuse and torture; whereas there are growing concerns for the welfare of those still trapped in areas controlled by ISIS/Daesh forces as almost no international humanitarian assistance reaches those areas;
- C. whereas religious and ethnic minorities, such as Christian, Yezidi, Turkmen, Shabak, Kaka’e, Sabaeen and Shi’a communities, as well as many Arabs and Sunni Muslims, have been targeted by Daesh/ISIS; whereas mosques, monuments, shrines, churches and other places of worship, tombs and cemeteries have been deliberately destroyed;
- D. whereas, in February 2015, Daesh/ISIS kidnapped more than 220 Assyrian Christians, after overrunning several farming communities on the southern bank of the Khabur river in the north-eastern province of Hassakeh, and whereas to date only a few have been released once their captors had received payment, while the fate of the others remains unknown;
- E. whereas the International Independent Commission of Inquiry has documented and reported that persons from ethnic and religious minorities opposing Daesh/ISIS and other terrorist groups, militias and non-state armed groups in areas under their de facto control continue to be at risk of persecution;
- F. whereas several reports by UN bodies, including the Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, the Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human rights, have stated that acts committed by Daesh/ISIS may amount to war crimes, crimes against humanity and, possibly, genocide;
- G. whereas genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes are of concern to all EU Member States, which are determined to cooperate with a view to preventing such crimes and putting an end to the impunity of their perpetrators, in accordance with Council Common Position 2003/444/CFSP of 16 June 2003;

- H. whereas under international law each individual has the right to live according to his or her conscience and to freely hold and change religious and non-religious beliefs; whereas political and religious leaders have a duty at all levels to combat extremism and to promote mutual respect among individuals and religious groups;
1. Recalls its strong condemnation of ISIS/Daesh and its egregious human rights abuses, which amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes, within the meaning of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and which could be referred to as genocide; is extremely concerned at this terrorist group's deliberate targeting of Christians, Yazidis, Turkmen, Shi'ites, Shabak, Sabeans, Kaka'e and Sunnis who do not agree with their interpretation of Islam, as part of its attempts to exterminate any religious minorities from the areas under its control;
 2. Urges each of the Contracting Parties to the UN Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed at Paris on 9 December 1948, and to other relevant international agreements, to prevent war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide within their territory; stresses that there must be no impunity for the perpetrators of these acts and that those responsible should be referred to the ICC; urges Syria and Iraq to accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court;
 3. Rejects without reservation, and considers illegitimate, the announcement by the leader of the so-called 'ISIS/Daesh' that it has established a 'caliphate' in the areas it now controls; emphasises that the creation and expansion of the 'Islamic caliphate', and the activities of other violent extremist groups in the Middle East, are a direct threat to the security of the region and of European countries, and a clear violation of international human rights law and international humanitarian law;
 4. Urges the Member States to work actively on fighting radicalisation and to improve their legal and jurisdictional systems in order to avoid their nationals and citizens travelling to join the so called 'ISIS/Daesh' and to ensure that, should they do so, they are criminally prosecuted as soon as possible, including for online incitement and support to commit those crimes; stresses the importance of prevention, prosecution, outreach, rehabilitation and reintegration;
 5. Recognises, supports and demands respect by all for the inalienable right of all ethnic and religious minorities, and others, living in Iraq and Syria, to continue to live in their historical and traditional homelands in dignity, equality and safety, and to fully practice their religion freely without being subject to any kind of coercion, violence or discrimination; stresses the need for a clear and unequivocal statement by all regional political and religious leaders in support of the region's ethnic and religious minorities and their continued presence and full and equal rights as citizens of their home countries;
 6. Asks the international community, including the EU and its Member States, to ensure the necessary security conditions and prospects for ethnic and religious minorities who have been forced to leave their homeland or have been forcibly displaced, to make effective as soon as possible their right to return to their homelands, to preserve their homes, land, property and belongings, as well as their churches and religious and cultural sites, and to be able to have a dignified life and future;

7. Stresses the importance of ensuring that all actors and the international community provide military protection and aid, including appropriate military assistance, to particularly vulnerable groups targeted by Daesh/ISIS in the Middle East, such as ethnic and religious minorities, and of securing their participation in future political lasting solutions with the aim of preserving their lives and traditions of intercultural, interethnic and interreligious coexistence; calls on all parties involved in the conflict to respect universal human rights and to facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid and assistance through all possible channels; recalls that it should be the ultimate commitment and responsibility of all regional actors, as well as the EU, to do their utmost to guarantee the return of traditional minorities and all citizens to the places where they previously lived and from which they were forced to flee;
8. Calls on all the Syrian parties, excluding terrorist groups such as al-Qaeda, Daesh, Jabhat al-Nusra and related groups, to come together under the auspices of the UN and, with the support of the entire international community, to negotiate a political transition; reaffirms its full and active support for the work of UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura in launching negotiations in Geneva between all the Syrian parties in the coming days and his proposals for local ceasefires; calls for the EU and the international community to put pressure on all donors to fulfil their promises and to fully commit themselves to providing financial support for the host countries, especially ahead of the Syria donors' conference in London on 4 February 2016;
9. Requests that the EU Humanitarian Aid and Cooperation units also fully cooperate in their work directly with the recognised leaders of the targeted ethnic and religious minorities and include them in their plans for, and in the practical implementation and distribution of, the aid, in order to better meet their needs and those of the population in general;
- 10.. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Government and Parliament of Syria, the Government and Council of Representatives of Iraq, the Regional Government of Kurdistan, the institutions of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (Gulf Cooperation Council, GCC), the United Nations Secretary-General, the United Nations General Assembly, the UN Security Council and the UN Human Rights Council.