



Plenary sitting

B8-0483/2016

12.4.2016

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Nigeria
(2016/2649(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

B8-0483/2016

**European Parliament resolution on Nigeria
(2016/2649(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Nigeria and in particular that of 29 April and 10 October 2015
- having regard to the statement in President Muhammadu Buhari's address to the European Parliament
- having regard to previous statements by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, including those of 8 January, 19 January, 31 March, and 14 and 15 April, 3 July 2015,
- having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini and Geoffrey Onyeama, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria at the sixth Nigeria-EU ministerial dialogue, held in Brussels on 15 March 2016;
- having regard to the European Union Election Observation Mission's Final Report on the General Elections, 2015;
- having regard to the statements made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon;
- having regard to the statements by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the possibility that members of Boko Haram could be accused of war crimes;
- having regard to the UN Declaration of 1981 on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief;
- having regard to the African Commission resolution on Human and Peoples' Rights, on the Human Rights Situation in Nigeria, which condemned acts of violence committed by armed groups against citizens in Nigeria 2012;
- having regard to the African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples of 1981, ratified by Nigeria on 22 June 1983;
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil Rights of 1966, ratified by Nigeria on 29 October 1993;
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;

- having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - A. whereas in December 3, 2015 agitations for a separate state of Biafra in the southeast led to the death of at least 12 people; whereas the violent responses of security forces to civil disturbances and protests in the southeast and northcentral Nigeria threatens to aggravate human rights challenges already caused by the lingering Boko Haram conflict in the northeast;
 - B. whereas sexual and gender violence is still flourishing in the troubled regions of the north-eastern Nigeria;
 - C. whereas fundamental rights such as education for young girls and women, social justice, and a fair distribution of state revenues in society and the fight against corruption is dramatically worsening;
 - D. whereas the increase in violent Boko Haram attacks have killed at least 8,200 civilians in 2014 and 2015, lead to the abduction of at least 2000 people, mostly women and children and large groups of students, forced recruitment of hundreds of men, and the displacement of 2 million people in northeast Nigeria; notably recalls that in March 2015 about 400 women and children, including at least 300 elementary school students, were abducted by Boko Haram from the town of Damasak in Borno State;
 - E. whereas terrorism is a global threat, but the global community's efforts to do more against Boko Haram in Nigeria depended to some degree on the full measure of credibility, accountability, and transparency of the new administration;
 - F. whereas the Middle-Belt region suffers years of economic and political tensions between ethnic and religious communities repeatedly; with the recent erupted uncontrolled violence in 2015 fuelled by competition for power and access to land between nomadic and farming communities;
 - G. whereas disputes over the allocation of rights and benefits to land resources have caused repeated inter-communal violences since Nigeria's independence; since 2015, economic and political tensions between ethnic and religious communities in the Middle Belt have escalated to an unprecedented scale;
 - H. whereas there were clashes between members of the Shia Islamic Movement of Nigeria and the army that killed an estimated 300 members of the group and whereas hundreds more including the IMN leader and his wife remain in custody without charges;
 - I. whereas the special investigation panel created by President's office in March 2016 to investigate of allegations of grave violations and abuses of human rights by security forces including killings, torture, enforced disappearances, have not been fulfilled and violence is dramatically escalating;
 - J. whereas Nigeria plays a key role in regional and African politics and is a driving force of regional integration through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS);
 - 1. Urges the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of its civilians in accordance with its regional and international human rights obligations;

2. Welcomes the progress made by the Nigerian armed forces in the fight against Boko Haram and assures Nigeria of its continued support in countering terrorism and violent extremism; welcomes the Abuja Security Summit to take place in May 2016;
3. Calls on the Nigerian government to adopt a comprehensive approach that addresses the underlying causes of violence, such as good governance deficits and perpetrators impunity.
4. Calls upon the Nigerian authorities to enforce legislation that condemns lack of respect for human rights and the rule of law, lack of accountability for previous and ongoing allegations of abuses by security forces and other agencies of government;
5. Calls on the government to launch comprehensive, independent, impartial and effective investigations into crimes under international law and other serious violations and abuses of human rights committed in the north-east;
6. Recommends a reform of the military's operating procedures to ensure non-recurrence of such violations;
7. Notably urges the Nigerian government to take urgent steps to secure the release of the women and children abducted from Damask;
8. Urges the Nigerian government to ensure the freedom of conscience and expression of its citizens throughout the country;
9. Calls on the Nigerian government to ensure the humane and fair treatment of prisoners, including detained British broadcaster Nnamdi Kanu, upholding international human rights norms, and to ensure access to a fair trial;
10. Strongly Condemns recent acts of killings committed in the middle belt marked by serious and massive human rights violations, in particular the massacre of innocent civilians;
11. Calls on the government and the international partners to increase investments to prevent and resolve inter-communal conflicts between farmers and pastoralists, supporting cooperation between conflicting communities through shared economic and natural resource management initiatives
12. Expresses concern that the current efforts to ensure accountability for mismanagement and embezzlement of public funds jeopardizes respect for human rights; specifically about allegations of the federal government's disregard for court orders to release some accused persons on bail;
13. Request the Nigerian authorities to reject the bill to Prohibit Frivolous Petitions and Other Matters Connected Therewith currently before the Nigerian Senate which seeks to criminalize the dissemination of "abusive statements" via social media, or the publication of discrediting petition against the government or others via print or electronic media, as it undermines press freedom and freedom of expression in Nigeria;
14. Calls on the ECOWAS, African Union and the international community at large to lend their support to the people of Nigeria in their struggle to preserve the achievements of democracy, national security and the territorial integrity of Nigeria;

15. Calls on the European Union and its Member States to fulfil their commitment to providing a comprehensive range of political, development and humanitarian support to help Nigeria and its people in supporting Nigeria young and fragile democracy, supporting programs at all levels of government that address poverty, youth unemployment and women's lack of empowerment.
16. 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 African Union, the governments of the countries of the ECOWAS, the Government and Parliament of Nigeria, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the UN Human Rights Council, and the ACP-EU JPA.