

**Question for written answer E-007587/2015  
to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Ilhan Kyuchyuk (ALDE)**

Subject: Desecration of places of worship and cultural monuments

At the end of March 2015, the Bulgarian Helsinki Committee released its Annual Report on the State of Human Rights in Bulgaria in 2014. The report states: 'As in 2013, no progress was achieved with regard to the situation of religious freedoms in Bulgaria during the year. Violations committed against representatives of religious denominations were largely left unpunished by the authorities. The violations include: vandalism of temples and assaults on religious followers.' The report also mentions the refusal of the prosecutor's office to initiate criminal proceedings for public instigation of religious hatred, discrimination and violence.

The occurrence of these violations is confirmed by the annual report on Bulgaria of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, which states that desecration of places of worship, cultural monuments and religious schools has been observed in the country. Most attacks are directed against mosques and involve painting various threats on their walls. Jewish schools and synagogues are also still being systematically vandalised. Their walls are regularly being painted with swastikas and slogans inciting violence. Non-traditional religions have not been overlooked. They have also been subjected to a number of violations and attacks.

1. Is the Commission aware of these acts of vandalism?
2. What measures does the Commission believe are necessary to protect places of worship and cultural monuments from being desecrated?