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MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

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

pursuant to Rule 115 of the Rules of Procedure

by Giusto Catania, Vittorio Agnoletto

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

on the freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the situation of Christian communities and other religious communities

European Parliament resolution on the freedom of thought, conscience and religion, the situation of Christian communities and other religious communities

The European Parliament,

- vu l'article 115, paragraphe 5, de son règlement,
- A. rappelant ses précédentes résolutions sur la liberté religieuse dans le monde, ainsi que ses résolutions annuelles sur les droits de l'Homme dans le monde,
- B. Whereas, according to International Human Rights law and namely, Article 18 of the ICCPR, “everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance”;
- C. Whereas UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of religion or belief, Asma Jahangir, highlights worrying situations where the freedom to adopt, change or renounce a religion or belief has been infringed and reports back numerous cases of inter-religious discrimination and violence, killings and arbitrary detention for reasons of religion or belief;
- D. Whereas women are in a particularly vulnerable situation and suffer from aggravated discrimination with regard to their religious, ethnic and sexual identities, such as practices that are harmful to the health, attacks on the right to life, honour killings, and attacks on their dignity, such as restrictions related to education or their exclusion from certain functions;
- E. Whereas other groups of people such as refugees, internally displaced persons, asylum-seekers, migrants, persons deprived of their liberty, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities and children of believers also face a growing number of violations of the right to freedom of religion or belief; recalling, in this respect, that the principle of non-refoulement, according to Article 33 of the Geneva Convention, prevents Contracting States from expelling or returning a refugee to the borders of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his religion;
- F. rappelant son attachement aux principes de la liberté religieuse et du libre exercice du culte, partout dans le monde, ainsi qu'à celui de la laïcité de l'Etat et de ses institutions publiques; soulignant qu'il est du devoir de ces autorités, partout dans le monde, de garantir ces libertés, y compris celle de changer de religion ou de ne pas en avoir;
- G. soulignant l'importance du dialogue entre les religions afin de promouvoir la compréhension entre les peuples;

- H. soulignant qu'il s'est exprimé à plusieurs reprises en faveur des droits des communautés religieuses et de la protection de leur identité, partout dans le monde, ainsi qu'en faveur de la reconnaissance et la protection des minorités religieuses, sans distinctions;
1. Points out that the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental human right which is guaranteed by various international legal instruments; recalls, at the same time, its attachment to the fundamental notion of interdependency of human rights;
 2. Strongly condemns all kinds of discrimination and intolerance based on religion and belief and acts of violence against all religious communities; urges the concerned countries to ensure that their constitutional and legislative systems provide adequate and effective guarantees of freedom of religion or belief as well as effective legal remedies for victims where the right to freedom of religion or belief is violated;
 3. Calls therefore on EU Member States as well as Partner countries to fully cooperate with UN Special procedures and in particular, to issue a standing invitation to the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief so as to facilitate the assessment of the State's respect in this matter;
 4. Insiste sur les grands dangers qui peuvent résulter d'une lecture religieuse ou communautaire de conflits complexes, insiste sur le fait qu'il est crucial de ne pas instrumentaliser les religions, calls for the protection of the freedom of religion and belief as well as the protection of minorities without bias or selectivity;
 5. Strongly condemns all acts of violence against Christian communities, wherever it happens, y compris les actes contre d'autres communautés religieuses, and urges the governments concerned to bring to justice the perpetrators of these crimes;
 6. rappelle que la liberté religieuse fait partie des droits fondamentaux reconnue par plusieurs déclarations et traités internationaux, et que par conséquent il est du devoir des autorités publiques to protect all religious communities from discrimination and repression;
 7. soutient avec conviction toute initiative de promotion du dialogue et du respect réciproque entre les religions, ainsi que le refus de la haine, la radicalisation violente et extrémiste;
 8. instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of EU Member States and the UN Secretary General.