



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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*Plenary sitting*

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17.1.2011

B7-0052/2011

## 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 110(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the situation of Christians in relation to freedom of religion

**Willy Meyer, Ilda Figueiredo, Bairbre de Brún, Takis Hadjigeorgiou,  
Kyriacos Triantaphyllides, Nikolaos Chountis**  
on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

**European Parliament resolution on the situation of Christians in relation to freedom of religion**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions,
  - having regard to both articles 18 of the UN Charter and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU,
  - having regard to the 1981 UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination based on Religion and Beliefs,
  - having regard to the UNCHR resolutions to combat ‘defamation of religions’,
  - having regard to Rule 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 1st January 2011 a terrorist attack to a Coptic Christian Church in Alexandria caused 21 deaths and dozens of injured from both the Christian and Muslim communities,
- B. whereas on 24th December 2010 there were attacks against several churches in Maiduguri and on 25th December there were bomb attacks in the Nigerian city of Jos, which led to the killing of 38 civilians while dozens of others were wounded,
- C. whereas on 25th December 2010 in Jolo (Philippines) a bomb exploded in a Christian church causing several injured,
- D. whereas on 25th December 2010 in the villages of Rizokarpaso and Ayia Triada in the peninsula of Karpasia in the occupied part of Cyprus the Turkish occupation regime interrupted by force the Christmas mass conducted for the enclaved Greek Cypriots,
- E. whereas according to both articles 18 of the UN Charter and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU ‘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 teaching, practice, worship and observance’,
- F. whereas several UNCHR resolutions call ‘all States, within their national legal framework, in conformity with international human rights instruments, to take all appropriate measures to combat hatred, discrimination, intolerance and acts of violence, intimidation and coercion motivated by religious intolerance, including attacks on religious places, and to encourage understanding, tolerance and respect in matters relating to freedom of religion or belief’,
1. Strongly condemns the bomb attacks at the Two Saints church in Alexandria, Nigeria and

Philippines; deeply denounces all kinds of violence, discrimination and intolerance based on religion and belief, against religious people, apostates and non-believers;

2. Expresses its condolences to the families of the victims and of those wounded in the recent attacks against religious denominations; calls the concerned governments to investigate the attacks to assure that they don't remain unpunished;
3. Condemns the interruption by force of the Christmas Mass celebrated on Christmas Day by the remaining 300 Christians in the occupied part of Cyprus by the Turkish occupation regime; underlines that this constitutes a violation of the basic human right of the exercise of religious freedom, of the ECHR and of the 3rd Vienna Agreement (1975) providing for the living conditions of the Greek Cypriots enclaved in the occupied part of Cyprus;
4. Stresses that the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental human right guaranteed by international legal instruments; reiterates at the same time its commitment with the fundamental concept of interdependence of all human rights;
5. Denounces the instrumentalization of religion in various political conflicts; supports all initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and mutual respect between religious communities; calls on all governments and religious authorities to promote tolerance, respect for freedom of religion and to take initiatives against hatred; asks the governments to guarantee freedom of religion and belief; reiterates its commitment to the value of secularism;
6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the governments and the parliaments of the Member States.