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Plenary sitting

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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 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on the discrimination against young girls in Pakistan, in particular the case of Malala Yousafzai
(2012/2843(RSP))

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on behalf of the S&D Group

European Parliament resolution on the discrimination against young girls in Pakistan, in particular the case of Malala Yousafzai (2012/2843(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolution of 15 December 2011 on the situation of women in Afghanistan and Pakistan,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on human rights and democracy in Pakistan, in particular that of 20 January 2011 and of 20 May 2010,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 April 2012 on the Annual Report on Human Rights in the World and the European Union's policy on the matter, including implications for the EU's strategic human rights policy,
- having regard to the statement of the President of the European Parliament of 1 October 2012 on the decision of the UN to create an international day of the girl child which is meant to highlight the particular needs and rights of girls and to advocate greater action and investment to enable girls to reach their full potential in line with international human rights standards and obligations,
- having regard to the statement of the spokesperson of the High Representative of 10 October 2012 on the shooting of a young human rights defender in Pakistan,
- having regard to the statements of UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and of the Executive Director of UN Women of 10 October 2012 condemning the attack on Malala Yousafzai,
- having regard to the EU-Pakistan 5-year engagement plan of March 2012, containing priorities such as good governance, cooperation in the field of women's empowerment and dialogue on human rights,
- having regard to the Council conclusions on Pakistan of 25 June 2012,
- having regard to Article 26 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR),
- having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 18 December 1979 and to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 20 December 1993,
- having regard to Rule 122(5) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas on 9 October 2012 Malala Yousafzai, a 14 year old girl from the Swat Valley was singled out in a school bus on her way home, shot in the head and severely wounded while two other girls were equally severely hurt in the attack;

B. whereas Malala Yousafzai had become as a national symbol of resistance against the Talibanisation of the Swat valley;

- A. whereas the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) have claimed responsibility for the attack and issued a statement after the attacks claiming it was obligatory to kill anyone leading a campaign against Islamic law and announcing that the movement would attempt to kill Yousafzai again if she recovers from her injuries;
- B. whereas in Pakistan and many other Muslim countries protests have taken place in admiration and solidarity with and in condemnation of the brutal attack by the Taliban;
- C. whereas the security forces have reacted with numerous arrests of suspects of the crime and whereas the Pakistani Parliament debated a motion condemning the attack which met however with the resistance from the main opposition party, the Pakistan Muslim League-N;
- D. whereas throughout the year 2011, schools continued to be directly targeted by armed groups in bomb and improvised explosive device attacks, resulting in 152 incidents of partial or complete destruction of school facilities in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the attacks reportedly to avenge military operations in the region and in opposition to secular and girls' education;
- E. whereas the situation for many women and girls in Pakistan remain acute with Pakistan being labelled the third most dangerous place in the world for women by the Global Gender Gap Index ;
- F. whereas many girls continue to be victims of domestic violence, trafficking, forced marriages, and being traded in settlement of disputes; whereas most cases of violence against women and girls remain unprosecuted;
- G. whereas during 2011 and 2012 the Government of Pakistan introduced new legislation to better tackle issues of discrimination and violence against women, including laws against forced marriage, harassment of women at the workplace and at home, and acid attacks; whereas these laws are still awaiting enforcement;
- H. whereas the spread of Taliban control in certain areas risks to jeopardize progress on the situation of women and girls;
- I. whereas the EU has reaffirmed in its 5-year engagement plan of March 2012 its commitment to building a strong long-term partnership based on 'mutual interests and shared values' with Pakistan, supporting Pakistan's democratic institutions and civilian government, as well as civil society;

- J. whereas the EU, while ready to pursue cooperation, counts on Pakistan to respect its international commitments, in particular in the field of security and human rights, including women's rights;
 - K. whereas the EU and Pakistan announced on 5 June 2012 the creation of a Steering Committee on Counter-Terrorism in order to enhance close cooperation against terrorism;
 - L. whereas Article 3(5) of the Treaty on European Union states that the promotion of democracy and respect for human rights and civil liberties are fundamental principles and aims of the European Union and constitute common ground for its relations with third countries;
1. Expresses its admiration and acknowledgement for the courage and determination with which Malala Yousafzai since very young age has engaged in a struggle for the rights of girls to receive education and has become a hero for many girls of her age; strongly hopes that she will be able to fully recover from her grave injuries;
 2. Welcomes the condemnation of the attack by large parts of the international community, by Pakistani public and most major political parties; notes in this respect that Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) was the only major political party which did not directly condemn the TTP as the ones who asserted responsibility for the attack;
 3. Calls on the Government of Pakistan to bring the responsible for the attack to justice, to ensure the future safety of Malala Yousafzai and her family and to do all in its capacity to help Malala to recover;
 4. Is deeply concerned about the situation of women and girls and the repeated reports of violations of children's and women's rights in Pakistan including reports of children being used by armed groups to carry out suicide attacks; stresses that, as a matter of urgency, closer international attention must be paid to the situation of women and girls in Pakistan;
 5. Is deeply worried about the worsening trend of violent extremism which constitutes a great threat to women and girls through the misinterpretation of Islam and use of intimidation and violence and which has already led to the destruction of girls' schools and flogging women in parts of FATA and KP;
 6. Urges the Pakistani government to firmly prosecute those individuals and groups inciting violence, in particular those calling for the killing of individuals and groups with whom they disagree;
 7. Welcomes the child protection policy in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) launched on 10 January 2012 which implements a plan for protective services and child protection units in all FATA Agencies;
 8. Welcomes the introduction of new legislation by the Government of Pakistan during 2011 and 2012 in order to better tackle issues of discrimination and violence against women, and calls on the Government to ensure the actual implementation of these new laws;

9. Calls on the Pakistani Government to make it a priority to increase the number of girls receiving school education, to drastically increase public funding for schools and to take effective measures to impose a standard curriculum of basic education on all privately or publicly owned madrassas who represent one of the main breeding grounds of ignorance and fanaticism in Pakistan today

10. Calls on the Commission and Council to continue support for education programmes aimed at improving the literacy and education of women in Pakistan;

11. Urges the European Commission and the Council, as well as the international community, to significantly increase funds aimed at government as well as civil society efforts to protect women and girls from rape, abuse and domestic violence and to support measures;

12. Insists that women's and children's rights be explicitly addressed in all human rights dialogues, and in particular the issue of combating and eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, including all forms of harmful traditional or customary practices, early or forced marriage, domestic violence and femicide, and likewise insists that the invocation of any custom, tradition or religious consideration of any kind in order to evade the duty to eliminate such brutality be rejected;

13. Calls on the competent EU institutions to include the issue of religious tolerance in society in its political dialogue with Pakistan, this matter being of central importance to the long-term fight against religious extremism;

14. Urges the competent EU institutions to insist that the Government of Pakistan uphold the democracy and human rights clause enshrined in the Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan; reiterates its call on the European External Action Service to regularly report on the implementation of the Cooperation Agreement and the democracy and human rights clause including the exercise of women's and children's rights;

15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the European External Action Service, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy / Vice-President of the European Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Governments and Parliaments of Pakistan.