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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 recent attacks on medical aid workers in Pakistan  
(2013/2537(RSP))

**Thomas Mann, Cristian Dan Preda, Bernd Posselt, Filip Kaczmarek, Roberta Angelilli, Mario Mauro, Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris, Zuzana Roithová, Monica Luisa Macovei, Sari Essayah, Giovanni La Via, Philippe Boulland, Jean Roatta, Tunne Kelam, Mariya Gabriel, Elena Băsescu, Petri Sarvamaa, Eduard Kukan, Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa, Anna Záborská**  
on behalf of the PPE Group

**European Parliament resolution on the recent attacks on medical aid workers in Pakistan  
(2013/2537(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Pakistan
  - having regard to the statement of 18 December 2012 from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),
  - having regard to the Commission Communication entitled "a special place for children in EU external action"<sup>1</sup>,
  - 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<sup>2</sup>,
  - having regard to the EU-Pakistan five-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, reiterating the EU's expectations regarding the promotion of and respect for human rights,
  - having regard to Rules 122(5) and 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on Jan 1 2013, six medical aid workers and one doctor were gunned down on their way home from the community centre where they were employed by a non-governmental organisation in the north-western Swabi region, about 75 km (45 miles) northwest of the capital of Islamabad
- B. whereas from 17 to 19 December 2012, nine health workers, six of whom were women, involved in Pakistan's polio eradication campaign were gunned down in Karachi and Peshawar
- C. whereas on 29 January 2013 a policeman providing security for a polio vaccination team was killed near Swabi and whereas on 31 January 2013 two polio vaccination workers were killed in a landmine blast in north-west Pakistan, although it is unclear whether this was a targeted attack
- D. whereas in another attack last July, a Ghanaian World Health Organisation doctor and his driver were wounded, who were helping fight polio in Karachi;

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2008) 55 final

<sup>2</sup> Texts adopted, P7\_TA(2012)0126.

- E. whereas it is suspected that all attacks were linked to campaigns to vaccinate Pakistani children against polio;
  - F. whereas the latest series of killings prompted WHO and UNICEF to suspend polio campaigns in the country;
  - G. whereas most attacks on health workers took place in north western areas near militant strongholds, and are allegedly linked to the Taliban;
  - H. whereas the reason for the recent attacks seem to be an opposition to the vaccination campaigns amongst Islamic extremist groups, who spread fake rumours that the vaccine is intended to make Muslim children sterile; whereas the incidents also seem to be linked to the fact that in the past foreign intelligence agencies have been using local vaccination teams across Pakistan for intelligence gathering;
  - I. whereas most of the victims of the assault on medical staff were women, which coincides with the Taliban militants' routine to attack female workers and advocates to give the message that women may not work outside the house;
  - J. whereas Pakistan is one of the rare countries where Polio is still endemic and 200 children were paralysed in 2011 as a consequence of the disease; whereas according to the WHO a failure to stop polio would mean serious health risks for the region and beyond as polio is a highly infectious disease;
  - K. whereas the Pakistani Government declared Polio a national emergency and is currently undertaking a polio vaccination campaign in an effort to eradicate the disease within its borders; whereas this campaign is supported internationally by the WHO, UNICEF and others and is part of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative; whereas the campaign is targeting 33 mio children for vaccination with several hundred thousand of health workers applying the vaccination country wide, in particular female health workers.
  - L. whereas such attacks deprive children in Pakistan of their right to basic life-saving health interventions and place them at risk for a disease that causes lifelong disability.
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- 1. Strongly condemns the multiple killings of and attacks on medical workers in the past months; stresses that these attacks deprive Pakistan's most vulnerable populations, especially children, of basic life-saving health interventions;
  - 2. Expresses its condolences to for the families of the victims;
  - 3. Welcomes the widespread condemnation of the attacks by the government of Pakistan and the country's civil society;
  - 4. Calls on the Government of Pakistan to bring to justice those responsible for the assaults during the last months;

5. Expresses its admiration for the courage and determination of those, many of whom are women, who work selflessly to eradicate polio and provide other health services to children in Pakistan;
6. welcomes the National Emergency Action Plan (NEAP) for Polio Eradication of the Pakistani Government of 2012, and stresses the importance of it being continued successfully in order to avoid a increase in the numbers of infections; notes that since the start of the latest immunization campaign the number of infections has reached historic lows;
7. Welcomes the efforts the government of Pakistan already took to increase security during medical campaigns; however calls on the Government of Pakistan to ensure the further safety of all medical aid workers and human rights activists active in Pakistan;
8. Calls on governments worldwide to safeguard the neutrality of humanitarian work, as a failure to do so may leave tens of thousands of people vulnerable to illnesses and endangers those who provide legitimate and essential health services;Is deeply concerned about the situation of women in Pakistan; particularly women and girls who become active in society, which have received threats from Taliban and other extremist groups;
9. Encourages the Government of Pakistan to implement a comprehensive information campaign to build up more support and ownership in the Pakistani society and to enhance the level of trust regarding vaccination campaigns; in this respect calls on the government to enter into dialogue with community leaders to address root causes of this problem;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the European External Action Service, the Vice-President of the European Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the EU Special Representative for Human Rights, the UN Women, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Human Rights Council and the Government and Parliament of Pakistan.