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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 Iraq: the recent violence in Iraq
(2013/2874(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on Iraq: the recent violence in Iraq
(2013/2874(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Union and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Iraq, of the other part (COM(2010)0638),
 - having regard to the International Covenant for Iraq adopted in Sharm el-Sheikh (Egypt) on 3 May 2007,
 - having regard to its previous resolutions on Iraq, including its resolution of 20 January 2011 on the situation of Christians in the context of freedom of religion and on 12 March 2013 on the plight of minority groups in Iraq,
 - having regard to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions 1956 (2010), 1957 (2010) and 1958 (2010) of 15 December 2010,
 - having regard to the Commission's Joint Strategy Paper for Iraq (2011-2013),
 - having regard to the recent report published by Amnesty International on the human rights situation in Iraq;
 - having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas over 5,000 people have died so far this year in Iraq in ongoing armed violence, including at least 887 in September 2013 alone according to the UNAMI; whereas many thousands of people have been injured in the violence, including over 2000 in September 2013
- B. whereas casualties are increasing month on month and Iraq is in serious danger of erupting back into civil war.
- C. whereas for the first time in six years, Irbil, the capital of the autonomous province of Kurdistan, was hit by bomb attacks which killed at least six people.
- D. whereas despite safety and security in a multi faith society being enshrined in Article 125 of the Iraqi constitution, sectarian violence in Iraq has reached its highest point since 2008,
- E. whereas the rapidly deteriorating security situation has greatly impacted on the ethnic minorities in Iraq, who are increasingly being targeted in attacks and are in serious danger of persecution.
- F. whereas 1.5 million Christian Iraqi citizens (Chaldeans, Syrians and members of other Christian minorities) were living in Iraq in 1990, though their numbers have fallen to less than 400,000 today; whereas they constitute an ancient, native population group which is now facing persecution and exile; and whereas hundreds of thousands of Christians have fled the violence of which they continue to be the target, raising concerns that one of the oldest Christian communities in the world may become extinct.

- G. whereas Iraq has long been home to a variety of ethnic and religious minority groups, including Christians, Turkmen, Kurds, Shabak, Mandeans, Armenians, Yezidi, Baha'is, Black Iraqis, Assyrians, Jews, Palestinians; whereas today only around 3,500 Mandaean-Sabeans remain in Iraq from a population of over 70,000 ten years ago and whereas it is estimated that the Jewish population in Iraq today numbers only 10 individuals, down from 150,000.
- H. whereas women from minority groups experience high levels of gender-based violence, including sexual violence and intimidation, with domestic violence being a major problem,
- K. whereas the Iraqi authorities have consistently banned protests and demonstrations against corruption
- L. whereas the crisis in Syria has created new substantial flows of refugees and returnees towards Iraq, and has allowed terrorist groups access to Kurdistan, significantly destabilising the security situation there.
- M. whereas on the 1st September 2013, Camp Ashraf was attacked by Iraqi security forces, leading to the deaths of 52 people inside the camp, including some shot in the head at close range; whereas seven hostages, six of whom are women, were taken from Camp Ashraf and they remain in a prison in or near Baghdad; whereas these attacks are the latest in a string of attacks on Camp Ashraf despite assurances from the Iraqi authorities and the UN Special Representative in Iraq that their safety would be guaranteed.
- N. whereas the EU High Representative Baroness Ashton stated on 19 September that "we have reason to believe that up to seven camp (Ashraf) residents are being held near Baghdad and there is a significant risk that they could be sent to Iran." She added "I have spoken with the Iraqi Foreign Minister to urge the authorities to ensure the release of the hostages and to impress on them the need to avoid any further violence"
- O. whereas statements by the UK High Commissioner for Refugees and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights have expressed great concern about these seven hostages
1. Strongly condemns the on-going acts of violence perpetrated against the civilian population in Iraq and calls on all players in Iraq to behave responsibly and with restraint.
 2. Highlights and condemns the terrorist actions of Sunni jihadist terrorist groups throughout Iraq and urges the international community to ensure that funding streams which such groups rely on are swiftly identified and shut down.
 3. Notes with extreme concern that vulnerable groups and all religious communities, including Christian minorities are frequently targets of violence, which instils in the population a deep sense of fear and uncertainty about their future and the future of Iraq.
 4. Calls on the Iraqi authorities to drastically increase their efforts to protect Christian minorities and all vulnerable minorities in order to guarantee every Iraqi citizen the right to practise their faith and affirm their identity in freedom and safety, to take far more determined measures to combat inter-ethnic and inter-religious violence, to protect the secular population and to do everything in their power to bring the perpetrators to justice.

5. Calls on Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to take all action within his power to uphold the Iraqi constitution and to ensure that the sectarian violence ceases and that effective security measures are put in place throughout the country to ensure the end to sectarian violence and the protection of all communities in Iraq.
6. Calls for the full implementation, without delay, of the Erbil agreement and establishment of a national unity government which properly represents the political, religious and ethnic diversity of Iraqi society; Is of the opinion that this is the *sine qua non* requirement for improving both the situation of the minorities in the country and the security situation in general;
7. Notes that the EU, together with the United Nations and the USA, have a number of diplomatic and economic tools available to exert pressure on the Iraqi government if they fail to peacefully bring about an end to the violence, including trade sanctions and reduction in international aid payments.
8. Expresses great concern at the negative spill-over from the Syrian conflict into Iraq, which is exacerbating sectarian tensions in Iraq and is making all parts of Iraq more vulnerable to terrorist attack, including the previously calm autonomous province of Kurdistan;
9. Calls on all players in Iraq to behave responsibly and with restraint to avoid further escalation of violence throughout the country
10. Expresses deep concern over the attack on Camp Ashraf on the 1st September 2013 by Iraqi forces, which left 52 Iranian refugees dead and reiterates that this is the latest on a string of attacks on both Camp Ashraf and Camp Liberty; Calls on the United Nations to send peacekeepers to protect the remaining 3000 Iranian refugees in Camp Liberty from further attacks by Iraq.
11. Highlights its dismay at the abduction of seven hostages from Camp Ashraf by forces under direct control of the government of Iraq and demands their immediate and unconditional release.
12. Demands an independent, international inquiry into the 1st September massacre at Camp Ashraf which does not involve the Iraqi government
13. Reiterates its concern about the prison-like conditions for the Iranian refugees who have been moved from Camp Ashraf to Camp “Liberty” (Hurriya); Calls on Iraq to ensure freedom of movement for the residents as required by UN High Commissioner for Refugees; Asks EU Member States to do everything possible to facilitate the resettlement of the residents of Camp Hurriya, so that the issue of their presence on Iraqi territory can be finally settled;
14. Notes that the number of refugees seeking safety in Iraq when fleeing neighbouring Syria continues to rise and that some of these refugee groups have been infiltrated by Sunni Jihadist groups which have launched attacks inside Iraq; Calls for the international community to assist the Iraqi authorities to identify these groups and to effectively manage the refugee flow into Iraq, both by ensuring that those refugees are accepted into the territory on humanitarian grounds and that they are directed to refugee camps

15. Notes that recently several protests against corruption have been banned from taking place; Urges the Iraqi authorities to ensure that protests are not banned for spurious reasons or because they are inconvenient and to respect the right to free association; Calls furthermore for action to be taken to root out corruption at all levels of government.
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Council, the President of the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the presidents of the parliaments of the Member States, the Government and the Council of Representatives of the Republic of Iraq.