



15.4.2014

B7-0400/2014

## 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 Syria: situation in certain vulnerable communities  
(2014/2695(RSP))

**Cristian Dan Preda, Ria Oomen-Ruijten, Bernd Posselt, Filip Kaczmarek, Mariya Gabriel, Tunne Kelam, Elena Băsescu, Monica Luisa Macovei, Eduard Kukan, Jean Roatta, Roberta Angelilli, Petri Sarvamaa, Eija-Riitta Korhola, Sari Essayah, Laima Liucija Andrikiėnė, Dubravka Šuica, Salvador Sedó i Alabart, Jarosław Leszek Wałęsa, Bogusław Sonik**  
on behalf of the PPE Group

**European Parliament resolution on Syria: situation in certain vulnerable communities (2014/2695(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Syria,
  - having regard to its annual reports on the situation of human rights in the world,
  - having regard to Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
  - having regard to Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
  - having regard to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion and Belief of 1981,
  - having regard to the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic of 12 February 2014,
  - having regard to the Foreign Affairs Council conclusions on Syria;
  - having regard to the European Council conclusions on Syria,
  - having regard to the statements by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR), Catherine Ashton, on Syria,
  - having regard to the statement by the Spokesperson of VP/HR Catherine Ashton of 8 April 2014 in reference to the killing of Father Frans van der Lugt, SJ in Homs, Syria,
  - having regards to the statements by the Commissioner responsible for International Cooperation, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Response, Kristalina Georgieva, on Syria,
  - having regard to the UN Security Council resolution of 22 February 2014 on Syria,
  - having regard to the statement by the Spokesman for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of 7 April 2014 on Syria,
  - having regard to Rules 122(5) and 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, according to the United Nations, since the start of the violence in Syria in March 2011, more than 150.000 people, most of them civilians and vulnerable groups, have been killed, more than 6.5 million people are internally displaced and there are more than 2.6 million Syrian refugees, mainly in Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt and Iraq;

- B. whereas there are still hundreds civilians trapped inside the Syrian cities where it is not allowed to provide food, water and medical assistance;
- C. whereas groups listed as terrorist organizations by the United Nations Security Council continue to brutalize the civilian population, human rights are being violated on a large scale by all parties in the conflict, including massacres, arbitrary arrest and unlawful detention, hostage-taking, enforced disappearance, execution of prisoners, systematic torture and ill-treatment, sexual violence and the violations of children's rights;
- D. whereas Government forces continue to indiscriminately destroy whole neighbourhoods burying entire families;
- E. whereas Dutch Jesuit Father Frans van der Lugt, aged 75, who had been living in Syria for many decades and well known for refusing to leave the besieged Syrian city of Homs, was beaten and shot dead by gunmen on Monday 7 April 2014; whereas the UN Secretary-General has condemned this inhumane act of violence against a man who heroically stood by the people of Syria amid sieges and growing difficulties;
- F. whereas Father Frans van der Lugt had become a renowned figure in the rebel-held area that had been blockaded by Government forces for nearly two years; whereas Father Frans van der Lugt was known by his complete commitment to assisting all those who turned to him for help;
- G. whereas there are 24 other Christians in the monastery where Father Frans van der Lugt was killed and the international community is worried about their safety;
- H. whereas the situation in the Old City of Homs has deteriorated since a UN brokered deal in February allowing about 1.500 civilians to leave;
- I. whereas the International community is also horrified by the gruesome images purporting executions in the Syrian town of Kassab, mainly perpetrated against the Armenians;
- J. whereas gross human rights violations undeniably continue and residents of entire villages such as Kassab have been forced to flee;
- K. whereas latest reports out of Syria show rebels from the Al-Qaeda linked al-Nusra Front have captured a number of Christian and Kurdish villages on the Turkish border, like the village of Kobani; whereas for months Christians and Kurdish have feared about their fate if militant Islamic groups take control of more areas;
- L. whereas more violence will only bring more suffering and instability to Syria and chaos in the region;

- M. whereas the Geneva II Conference on Syria was opened by the UN Secretary-General on 22 January 2014, its aim being to achieve a political solution to the conflict, and there were two rounds of talks;
1. Strongly condemns the violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Assad regime; condemns any human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law by armed groups opposing the regime; strongly condemns the increasing number of terrorist attacks carried out by extremist organisations and individuals associated with Al-Qaeda;
  2. Extends its condolences to the victims' families; applauds the courage of the Syrian people and reiterates its solidarity with their struggle for freedom, dignity and democracy;
  3. Calls for the cessation of all hostilities in Syria; urges that all parties immediately put an end to all forms of violence, irrespective of where it comes from; calls on all parties to engage constructively in a genuine negotiation; reiterates its support for a political and democratic solution to the conflict, and underlines the fundamental importance of the Geneva II process; is convinced that a lasting solution to the current crisis in Syria can only be achieved through a Syrian-led, inclusive political process with the backing of the international community;
  4. Deplores the assassination of Father Frans van de Lugt, who has given the world the testimony of the most tragic situation that thousands of Syrians find themselves in at the moment; pays tribute to Father Frans van de Lugt, whose work extended beyond the besieged Old City of Homs and continues to help hundreds of civilians with their everyday survival needs;
  5. Strongly condemns the arbitrary detention and torture of civilians in Syria, notably in prisons and detention facilities, as well as the kidnappings, abductions and forced disappearances, and demands the immediate end of these practices and the release of all arbitrarily detained persons;
  6. Is deeply concerned about the continuation of the dire situation for the Syrian people, with the increasing number of casualties and of persons in need of humanitarian aid;
  7. Is concerned about the plight of all vulnerable groups in Syria, such as ethnic and religious minorities, including Christians; stresses that all parties have a duty to protect all the different minorities present in Syria; reiterates the importance of their participation in the Geneva II process, with the aim of preserving the tradition of intercultural, interethnic and interreligious coexistence in the country;
  8. Calls upon all parties to immediately lift the sieges of populated areas, and other locations; appeals to all sides to permit immediately the unfettered access of humanitarian assistance and workers, especially in order to help the most vulnerable communities in the country, especially providing food and shelter to help vulnerable people, namely women and children, to live in dignity;
  9. Asks for humanitarian assistance to Kassab, where rebel jihadist forces have gained control and more than 2,000 residents of the largely Christian Armenian city have fled, leaving behind a "ghost town";
  10. Is deeply concerned about the total number of Syrian refugees in the neighboring countries, especially in Lebanon, where the number has now passed the 1 million mark, according to the U.N.'s refugee agency, not including the tens of thousands who have not registered with the agency, while 12.000 people are fleeing Syria for Lebanon each week;
  11. Is deeply concerned about the refugee outflow affecting Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and

- Iraq with the overall number of Syrian refugees being more than 2.6 million plus 6.5 million Syrians who are internally displaced, and 9.3 million who are in need of humanitarian assistance ;
12. Expresses its solidarity with innocent vulnerable communities and deplores the suffering concealed behind these bald figures, where children are particularly badly affected;
  13. Is worried about the increase of Islamist fundamentalism in large areas of northern Syria which are now under the control of jihadi groups and militias who, whatever else they may disagree about, are united in their opposition to western values and interests;
  14. Expresses its deep concern about the way instability is steadily spreading outwards to affect neighboring countries;
  15. Reiterates its call for the establishment of safe havens along the Turkish-Syrian border, and possibly within Syria, and for the creation of humanitarian corridors by the international community;
  16. Notes that growing instability and consequent political uncertainty are also affecting pro-western Lebanon and Jordan, while apparently reviving Shia-Sunni conflict in Iraq is being fed by the Syrian flames, where reports suggest many Iraqi Shia fighters are now inside Syria, determined, like the Hezbollah fighters from Lebanon, to bolster the Assad regime against its mostly Sunni foes; supports the EU's call on all foreign fighters in Syria, including Hezbollah, to withdraw immediately, and to cease all external funding and support;
  17. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the Secretary General of the United Nations and all the parties involved in the conflict in Syria.