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Plenary sitting

15.7.2014

B8-0019/2014

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 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on Nigeria, recent attacks by Boko Haram
(2014/2729(RSP))

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on behalf of the ALDE Group

B8-0019/2014

**European Parliament resolution on Nigeria, recent attacks by Boko Haram
(2014/2729(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolutions, namely of 4 July 2013 and 15 March 2012 on the situation in Nigeria; and of 22 October 2013 on the situation of human rights in the Sahel region;
- having regard to the statement by the HR/VP Catherine Ashton on Nigeria of 19 June 2014 on recent attacks in Nigeria, and of 15 April 2014 condemning the abduction of girls;
- having regard to the Statement by the EEAS Spokesperson on Nigeria of 26 June 2014;
- having regard to the EU Council conclusions of 12 May 2014 on abductions in Nigeria;
- having regard to the Commission implementing regulation No 583/2014 of 28 May 2014 amending for the 214th time Council Regulation (EC) No 881/2002 imposing certain specific restrictive measures directed against certain persons and entities associated with the Al Qaida network;
- having regard to UN Security Council concern over the threat posed by the activities of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria and the neighbouring countries of Niger, Chad and Cameroon;
- having regard to the statements of the UN envoy citing region's daunting challenges, Boko Haram threat to Nigeria, of 8 July 2014;
- having regard to the statements of the UN Secretary General of 30 and 26 of June and on the 21 May on the on-going horrific attacks in Nigeria;
- having regard to the UN Secretary General's report on Children in Armed Conflicts (CAAC), published on 1 July 2014;
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights of 1981, ratified by Nigeria on 22 June 1983;
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, ratified by Nigeria on 29 October 1993;
- having regard to the second revision of the Cotonou Agreement, ratified by Nigeria on 27 September 2010;

- 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 African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, ratified by Nigeria on 16 May 2003, and to the additional Protocol thereto, ratified by Nigeria on 22 December 2008;
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 November 2012 on a digital freedom strategy in EU foreign policy;
 - having regard to its resolution of 13 June 2013 on the freedom of press and media in the world;
 - having regard to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria adopted on 29 May 1999, and in particular the provisions of Chapter IV on the protection of fundamental rights, including the right to life, the right to a fair hearing, the right to the dignity of human persons, and the protection of freedom of expression, freedom of the press, freedom of thought, freedom of conscience and freedom of religion;
 - having regard to Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, ratified by Nigeria on 20 June 1961, and to Protocol II thereto, ratified by Nigeria on 10 October 1988, both of which establish international law in respect of non-international armed conflicts;
 - having regard to Rules 122(5) and 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure;
- A. whereas the Boko Haram is a growing threat for the stability of Nigeria and its neighbouring countries, whereas security situation remains extremely difficult with the state of emergency declared and maintained since May 2013 over the states of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa;
- B. whereas Boko Haram continues to target those who do not adhere to their dogmatic and extreme beliefs and is driving people out of their homes; whereas Boko Haram's stated goal is to create an Islamic caliphate in the Northern part of Nigeria;
- C. whereas Boko Haram, which seeks to impose a strict form of Sharia, or Islamic law, has been attacking Nigeria's police and military, rival clerics, politicians, schools, religious buildings, public institutions, and civilians of different faiths with increasing regularity since 2009;
- D. whereas Boko Haram is held responsible for at least 18 attacks on civilians in northern Nigeria in the past two weeks; whereas there are growing political tensions ahead of planned general elections in 2015;
- E. whereas over 2.000 people have been killed this year in attacks Boko Haram is considered to have waged;

- F. whereas some 276 schoolgirls were abducted April 15 from a school in north-east Chibok, Borno State, dozens escaped and 219 still are missing, negotiations to free the girls without violent confrontation appear to have stalled, with Boko Haram demanding the release of detained extremists in exchange for the girls;
- G. whereas since the girls were captured over 470 civilians have been killed in various locations by Boko Haram;
- H. whereas In May 2014 Amnesty International revealed that Nigerian security forces failed to act on advance warnings about Boko Haram's armed raid on the state-run boarding school in Chibok - knowing four hours of advance about the attack;
- I. whereas Borno state governor Kashim Shettima said in February 2014 that Boko Haram is better armed and better motivated than state armed forces, which are capable of providing some security in major cities, but are ill-equipped for counter-insurgency campaigns;
- J. whereas security officials in Nigeria and around the world are concerned that Boko Haram has splintered into two factions: one that is focused on local grievances and another that is seeking regional expansion;
- K. whereas there are many root causes off which Boko Haram feeds: escalating violence: dispute over the 2011 election results, which led to more than eight hundred deaths, poverty with 70 percent of the population living on less than \$1.25 a day, corruption, police brutality and extrajudicial killings taking place with impunity;
- L. Whereas Nigeria is the most populous African country with over 170 million inhabitants; whereas in Nigeria 9.5 million people are affected by conflict and natural disasters, whereas there are more than 255 000 internally displaced people in north-eastern Nigeria and estimated 70 000 refugees and returnees in Niger, Cameroon and Chad;
- M. whereas although Nigeria is one of the world's largest oil producers, nearly 60 % of the population live on less than a dollar a day;
- N. whereas in the name of ending Boko Haram's threat to Nigeria's citizens, government security forces killed hundreds of suspected members of the group and arrested hundreds of people during raids across the north while many of those detained were held incommunicado without charge or trial, in some cases in inhumane conditions, some were physically abused, others disappeared or died in detention; whereas these abuses in turn are used to fuel the group's campaign of violence;
- O. whereas freedom of expression and freedom of the press are being jeopardised by threats of arrest, intimidation, violence and even death against those reporting critical of Nigerian authorities; whereas Boko Haram has repeatedly threatened to attack media outlets that have reported negatively on it;
- P. whereas owing to the declaration of the state of emergency, large parts of the north-eastern states have become inaccessible to aid agencies, journalists and reporters; whereas the

government has shut down mobile phone services in several areas to stop militants communicating;

- Q. whereas the UN estimates that 650,000 people have been displaced by the Boko Haram crisis; whereas such displacements put also a strain on meagre local food and water resources, especially in Niger, which itself struggles with food insecurity due to years of drought;
 - R. whereas Boko Haram is included in the list of abusers in the UN report on abuse of children in war, released on 1 July;
 - S. whereas Boko Haram was recently added to UN list of AL-Qaida associates, which are subject to financial sanctions and an arms embargo; whereas the EU should have taken the lead by adding Boko Haram to its own terror list;
 - T. whereas in June 2014 the EU has transposed the UN decision to designate Boko Haram as a terrorist organization, covered by the freezing of funds and economic resources under EC Regulation No 881/2002 with (EU) Commission Implementing Regulation No 583/2014 of 28 May 2014;
 - U. whereas the International Criminal Court report from November 2012 states that reasonable grounds exist for believing that Boko Haram has committed acts constituting crimes against humanity;
 - V. whereas LGBTI people are discriminated through the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Law and sections 214, 215 and 217 of the Nigerian Penal Code;
1. Strongly condemns the recent violence, in particular the abduction of more than 270 school girls in north eastern Chibok, Borno state, and calls for the immediate and unconditional release of the school girls and for those responsible to be brought to justice; et dénonce l'atteinte absolue aux droits fondamentaux le fait que Boko Haram interdise aux jeunes filles d'accéder à l'éducation (denounces violation of
 2. Is appalled by all on-going horrific attacks being carried out by Boko Haram including those July 2014 on several villages in Borno state, in Abuja and Lagos; deplores that such violence has become an almost daily occurrence; expresses condolences to the families of the victims and calls for those responsible for these acts to be brought to justice,
 3. Calls on the Nigerian government and authorities to work together to ensure the abducted girls are brought home safely, to improve transparency about the rescue efforts and to provide adequate information as well as medical and psychological support to families of abducted girls in order to end the climate of suspicion,
 4. Is of the opinion that Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on grave violations of children's rights in situations of armed conflict should be activated in Nigeria and UNICEF should increase its capacity in this area, in line with its mandate,

5. Calls on the EU and its Member States to offer their support to the Nigerian authorities in its on-going efforts to protect its citizens and to defeat terrorism in all its forms, while fully respecting human rights and international law,
6. Urges Nigerian political leaders to forge a unified stance in confronting the persisting insecurity; calls on the Federal Government to crack down on Boko Haram which is boosting its strength by exploiting deep-seated tensions in Nigeria,
7. Urges the Government of Nigeria to guarantee the security and protection of its population against the violence of Boko Haram and to abstain from extra judicial attacks or reprisal killings, while upholding its obligations under internationally recognised human rights standards and acting in line with the rule of law,
8. Reminds the Government's actions undertaken against Boko Haram should not lead to further fuelling of the violence; calls in this respect for a reform of the Nigerian state security forces, including police, and conducting investigations against those who are responsible for any human rights violations including extrajudicial killings, torture, arbitrary arrests, and extortion-related abuses,
9. Calls for improving efficiency and independence of Nigeria's judiciary system as a mean of effective use of criminal justice to combat terrorism,
10. Underlines the importance of regional cooperation for addressing the threat posed by a possible connexion between Boko Haram and AQMI (Al Qaeda au Maghreb Islamique); encourages the countries in the region to deepen their cooperation, including through the relevant regional organisations, in order to prevent synergies between Boko Haram and AQMI; calls on the EU institutions and Member states to lend their support to these regional efforts,
11. Calls on the Federal Government to resolve the economic and social problems which affect the country with spiralling violence by taking several measures, such as by addressing government inefficiencies and corruption, mismanagement and embezzlement of the country's vast oil wealth, widespread poverty, police abuse, and longstanding impunity for a range of crimes in order to provide the basis for a long term and lasting solutions,
12. Is concerned that by adopting the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Law the Nigerian government failed to fulfil obligations stemming from respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law, referred to in Article 9 (2) of the Cotonou Agreement; calls for the abolition of this law, along with sections 214, 215 and 217 of the Nigerian Penal Code; Reiterates its calls on the EU Member States, or the High Representative with the support of the Commission, to consider targeted sanctions, such as travel and visa bans for the key individuals responsible for drafting and adopting the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Law; Reiterates its call on the Commission and the Member States to review their development cooperation aid strategy with Nigeria and to give priority to redirection of aid to civil society and other organisations over suspension – even on a sectoral basis – of aid,

13. Urges the Nigerian Government to recognise and respect freedom of the press and media and to allow journalists and reporters access to the front lines, as the press and media can play an important role in strengthening accountability and documenting human rights abuses,
14. Recognises that mobile phones represent an important form of communication for militants, but urges the Nigerian Government not to resort to blocking the entire network, as this amounts to disproportionate restrictions to access to information and the use of mobile phones by citizens,
15. Warns that Boko Haram must be fought in a broad comprehensive approach, including social, economic and political incentives which target the root problems in Nigeria, which can be exploited by extremism and militancy; emphasized in this respect that multiple problems Nigerians face should be viewed from a narrow security perspective,
16. Calls upon the Vice-President / High Representative, Catherine Ashton, to urge the Nigerian Government to exercise respect for human rights in its counterterrorism operations,
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 governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Federal Government of Nigeria, the institutions of the African Union and ECOWAS, the UN Secretary-General, the UN General Assembly, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, and the PAN-African Parliament (PAP).