



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2014 - 2019

Plenary sitting

13.1.2015

B8-0062/2015

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 Pakistan, in particular the situation following the Peshawar school attack (2015/2514(RSP))

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on behalf of the PPE Group

B8-0062/2015

**European Parliament resolution on Pakistan
(2015/2514(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Pakistan,
 - having regard to Articles 3, 18 and 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to the UN Convention on the rights of the child of 1989
 - having regard to the Council conclusions of 16 November 2009 on freedom of religion or belief, in which the Council emphasises the strategic importance of this freedom and of countering religious intolerance,
 - having regard to the EU-Pakistan five-year engagement plan of March 2012, which contains priorities such as good governance and dialogue on human rights, as well as the closely related 2nd EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue of 25 March 2014,
 - having regard to the statement of 16 December 2014 by High Representative/Vice-President Federica Mogherini on the attack on a school in Peshawar
 - having regard to the statement of 16 December 2014 by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Pakistan school killings,
 - having regard to the report of 5 August 2011 to the UN General Assembly, on the protection of education during emergencies by the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education
 - having regard to its resolution of 12 March 2014 on Pakistan's regional role and political relations with the EU,
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas on 16 December 2014 a group of Taliban militants attacked the Army Public School (APS) in Peshawar killing at least 140 people, including 134 school children, and leaving many more injured;
- B. whereas, following the attack on 16 December 2014, the Pakistani army has broadened its operations against militants, which began earlier that year in North Waziristan;
- C. whereas within hours after the APS Peshawar attack, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif lifted the death penalty moratorium which has been in place for six years; whereas so far 9 prisoners on death row for terrorism related charges have been executed; whereas according to Pakistani officials 500 convicts could be executed in the coming weeks; whereas there are an estimated 8000 people on death row in Pakistan;

- D. whereas in the aftermath of the APS Peshawar attack, the military has pushed for new courts to try terrorism related crimes, arguing that a weak civilian judicial system has failed to bring Taliban and other Islamists militants to justice; whereas on January 6, 2015 the National Assembly and the Senate have approved, with a two-third majority, the 21st Constitutional Amendment Bill and the Pakistan Army Act 1952 Amendment Bill providing constitutional basis for the establishment of military courts in the country for a period of two years; whereas military courts will be thus empowered to try militants from any group that "raises arms or wages war against Pakistan, or attacks the armed forces of Pakistan and law enforcement agencies"; whereas on January 7th 2015, President Mamnoon Hussain signed the two bills into law; whereas the 21st Constitutional Amendment Bill was challenged before the Pakistani Supreme Court;
- E. whereas on 9 October 2012 Malala Yousafzai, a 14-year-old girl from the Swat Valley, was singled out in the school bus on her way home, shot in the head and neck and severely wounded, for her resistance against the Taliban's efforts to deprive girls of an education;
- F. whereas since years terrorism and religious extremism have taken its toll on the Pakistani people, in particular, children for whom access to education is made impossible or puts their lives at risk;
- G. whereas the freedom of belief and religious tolerance in Pakistan is both threatened by terrorist violence and the widespread abuse of blasphemy laws;
- H. whereas Pakistan plays an important role in fostering stability in South Asia and should therefore lead by example in strengthening rule of law and human rights;
1. Is deeply shocked by the Taliban attack on the Peshawar Army Public school and strongly condemns the brutal murders of at least 140 people, mostly school children; shares its deep grief and sympathy with the families of the victims of this terrorist attack and the Pakistani people;
 2. Expresses its full commitment to tackle the threat posed by terrorism and religious extremism and its readiness to further assist the Pakistani government in this; is concerned, however, about links of the Pakistan armed forces and intelligence services with some Taliban groups in the past and underlines therefore that no form of terrorism or extremism must be supported by the authorities;
 3. Recalls its constant opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances; regrets the decision of the Pakistani government to lift the moratorium on the death penalty following the Peshawar school attacks;
 4. Expresses its concern regarding recent legislation providing for use of military courts to ensure speedy trials for terrorists; Underlines that the trial of civilians in military courts may raise serious problems regarding equitable, impartial and independent administration of justice;

5. Calls on the government to fully respect human rights and uphold the rule of law by fulfilling its obligations including under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
6. Stresses the need for a coherent strategy to fight terrorism and militancy; takes the view that reinforcing rule of law in the country is a powerful tool for countering extremist threats; Emphasizes that in the fight against terrorism and religious extremism it is crucial to work on its root causes, including by addressing poverty, ensuring religious tolerance and freedom of belief and guaranteeing the right and safe access to education for girls and boys;
7. Is concerned about the continued use of blasphemy laws in Pakistan; believes that this does not contribute to a climate of religious tolerance; calls on the Pakistani government to reinstate the moratorium, review the blasphemy laws and their application, and ensure the safety of schools and the access for both girls and boys;
8. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, 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 governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Secretary-General of the UN, the UN Human Rights Council, and the Government and