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*Plenary sitting*

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9.2.2015

B8-0136/2015

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

to wind up the debate on the statement by the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

pursuant to Rule 123(2) of the Rules of Procedure

on the humanitarian crisis in Iraq and Syria, in particular in the IS context (2015/2559(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

**B8-0136/2015**

**European Parliament resolution on the humanitarian crisis in Iraq and Syria, in particular in the IS context (2015/2559(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the humanitarian situation in Iraq and in Syria, including that of 18 September 2014 on the situation in Iraq and Syria, and the IS offensive, including the persecution of minorities<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the comments of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, of 8 September 2014 on the violence in Syria and Iraq,
- having regard to the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- having regard to UN Human Rights Council resolution S-22/1 of 1 September 2014 on the human rights situation in Iraq in the light of abuses committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups,
- having regard to the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, which was opened for signature on 11 May 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey,
- having regard to the comments of the UN envoy to Iraq, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, to the UN Security Council of 18 November 2014,
- having regard to the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on gender equality,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- having regard to the conclusions of the Foreign Affairs Council of 15 December 2014,
- having regard to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief of 1981,
- having regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the additional protocols thereto,
- having regard to the EU Guidelines on the promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief, adopted on 24 June 2013,
- having regard to Rule 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

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<sup>1</sup> Texts adopted, P8\_TA(2014)0027.

- A. whereas the ongoing violence in Syria and Iraq has created an unprecedented humanitarian crisis with millions of people displaced, facing violence on a daily basis, and in need of food, water, healthcare and shelter; whereas ethnic and religious minorities find themselves in a particularly vulnerable situation in this crisis; whereas those fleeing the violence have been forced to seek refuge in neighbouring countries, placing an additional strain on the communities which host them;
- B. whereas the already catastrophic situation in Syria caused by the ongoing civil war has been made worse by the violent extremism of the so-called Islamic State (IS) fighters in both Syria and neighbouring Iraq;
- C. whereas the number of internally displaced people in Syria is estimated at 7.6 million and in Iraq at 1.8 million;
- D. whereas large numbers of women and children have been killed or abducted by IS in Syria and Iraq; whereas those abducted women and girls have reportedly been subjected to rape or sexual abuse, forced to marry fighters, or sold into sexual slavery; whereas some women have been sold as slaves for as little as USD 25;
- E. whereas the so-called Islamic State has committed numerous atrocities which constitute crimes against humanity, including videotaped beheadings and immolation;
- F. whereas the sickening murder of Jordanian pilot Moaz al-Kasasbeh is the latest illustration of the Islamic State's vile ideology, which runs counter to the most elementary human values and rights;
- G. whereas political and religious leaders have a duty at all levels to combat extremism and terrorism and to promote mutual respect among individuals and religious and ethnic groups;
- H. whereas international humanitarian and human rights law prohibits the targeting of individuals or groups based on religious or ethnic identity, as well as attacks against civilians not taking part in hostilities; whereas such actions may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity;
- I. whereas the expansion of the Islamic State 'caliphate' and its extremist activities are a direct threat not only to the people of Syria and Iraq but also to the security of the wider region;
- J. whereas hundreds of foreign fighters, including many from EU Member States, have reportedly joined the fighting alongside IS; whereas these EU citizens are identified as a security threat;
- K. whereas the UN and other international organisations have reported widespread human rights abuses in Iraq and Syria by IS, including targeted killings of Christians and other minority ethnic and religious groups; whereas there are growing concerns for the welfare of those still trapped in areas controlled by IS forces;
- L. whereas a report by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in February 2015

claims IS militants are selling abducted children as sex slaves and killing others, including by means of crucifixion and burying alive;

1. Condemns without reservation the killings, kidnappings, rape, sexual violence and torture committed by IS fighters in Syria and Iraq, and believes such actions may constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity; further condemns the acts of violence carried out by the Assad regime in Syria against his own people;
2. Expresses growing concern about the deteriorating humanitarian and human rights situation in Syria and Iraq and the violations of international humanitarian law, not least in the context of Islamic State insurgency;
3. Believes that instability in Syria caused by the ongoing civil war has contributed to the growth of the Islamic State;
4. Is deeply concerned by the terrorist acts committed against women and girls by the so-called Islamic State and associated groups, including against members of Christian and other ethnic and religious minorities;
5. Further stresses the importance of taking appropriate steps to ensure the safety of women and girls in Syria and Iraq, as well as members of religious and ethnic minority groups;
6. Gives political support to the right to self-defence of religious and ethnic minorities where this is necessary in order to ensure their safety; further calls on the international community to safeguard all those fleeing terrorism or acts of violence;
7. Condemns without reservation the use of forced religious conversion of Christian and other religious and ethnic minorities in Syria and Iraq by so-called Islamic State forces;
8. Believes all efforts must be made to counter terrorism and to hold those responsible to account; further believes that the international response to such terrorism must be conducted in line with international law;
9. Reiterates its condemnation of violence and murders against LGBT people in the region, which have been taking place with total impunity; points out that the situation of LGBT people in the region is particularly vulnerable, given limited family and community support and government protection, and that their safety remains at risk in refugee communities or in certain host societies; calls on the Iraqi government, the EU delegation to Iraq and the embassies of EU Member States in the region to provide protection for LGBT people and to expedite direct resettlement of those LGBT individuals fleeing because of safety concerns;
10. Is sickened by reports that IS militants are using children – including those with mental health problems – as suicide bombers and human shields, while also selling abducted children as sex slaves and killing others, including by means of crucifixion and burying alive;
11. Calls for all necessary measures to be taken to rescue children under the control of IS

and to prosecute perpetrators of crimes; further acknowledges, however, that at present the international community appears powerless to hold the fighters accountable for gross human rights abuses;

12. Calls on the Member States to work with international partners to use all possible means, including appropriate military assistance, to help the people of Syria and Iraq combat the IS threat;
13. Calls for the UN arms embargo and asset freeze to be enforced more effectively and for the enforcement of sanctions against traders in oil extracted in IS-controlled areas in order to cut off financial flows that enable IS to do business and fund their terrorist activities;
14. Supports all those engaged in the fight against the IS terrorism and other armed/terrorist groups; further calls on all regional actors and governments to cooperate fully in combating the IS threat; stresses that such cooperation is vital to the security of the region;
15. Believes that all options must be kept open and nothing ruled out when it comes to combating the threat posed by IS; calls further on the European Union, its Member States and other international actors to work closely in developing an urgent and comprehensive response to the IS threat;
16. Voices concern at reports of hundreds of foreign fighters, including citizens from EU Member States, who have joined the IS insurgency; calls further for international cooperation in taking appropriate legal action against any individuals suspected of being involved in acts of terrorism;
17. Welcomes the recent liberation of the Syrian town of Kobane from IS forces, and salutes the bravery of Syrian YPG fighters helped by Kurdish Peshmerga forces and assisted by international coalition airstrikes;
18. Welcomes the recent commitment of Jordan to escalate its offensive against IS; calls further on the international coalition fighting IS to improve its search and rescue missions for lost pilots to prevent any more captures by IS;
19. Is firmly of the opinion that fighting IS in Iraq alone will not be sufficient to defeat the extremists;
20. Calls for the air campaign against IS to be extended to Syria, and in particular the area in and around Raqqa;
21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the EEAS, 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 Arab League and the Government of Iraq.