



Plenary sitting

B8-1023/2015

6.10.2015

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 the displacement of children in Northern Nigeria as a result of Boko Haram attacks

(2015/2876(RSP))

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on behalf of the EFDD Group

European Parliament resolution on the displacement of children in Northern Nigeria as a result of Boko Haram attacks (2015/2876(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- Having regard to the Statement by the Spokesperson on the repeated suicide attacks in Cameroon and Nigeria and the continuing violence in the region of 27 July 2015
 - Having regard to the Convention on the Rights of the child of 1989 and its optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict of 2000
 - Having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948
 - Having regard to the Council decision to add Boko Haram to the EU list of designated terrorist organizations
 - Having regard to United Nations Decision of December 2014 to formally establish in Nigeria a country task force on children affected by armed conflict to monitor and report on violations against children in the country by Boko Haram
 - Having regard to the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on violations and abuses committed by Boko Haram and the impact on human rights in the affected countries of 29 September 2015;
 - Having regard to the Commission's decision to allocate €1.8 billion from the EU's financial means to set up an 'Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa in Africa'.
 - Having regard to its previous resolutions on Nigeria
 - Having regard to rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure
- A. Whereas despite recent advances by Nigerian and regional armed forces, Boko Haram fighters continue to deliberately target civilians and to commit war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, torture, rape, forced marriages and the recruitment of child soldiers,
- B. Whereas a sharp increase in attacks by the armed group Boko Haram has uprooted 500000 children over the past five months, bringing the total number of children on the run in northeast Nigeria and neighbouring countries to 1.4 million, over half of them under 5 years old
- C. Whereas at least 1600 civilians have been killed by Boko Haram in the last 4 months bringing the death toll to at least 3500 civilians in 2015 alone

- D. Whereas on Saturday 3 October five girls have reportedly detonated themselves in the north-eastern city of Maiduguri, killing at least 18 people and wounding more than 40; whereas news agencies quoted local witnesses and officials as saying that some of the girls “were as young as nine and not older than fourteen.”; whereas no group has claimed the attacks yet but using female suicide bombers is a common tactic of Boko Haram, which is also present in the area;
- E. Whereas Madiguri’s bomb attack is just the last in time as such kind of attacks continue to kill and cause injury to civilians across north-east Nigeria; whereas although Boko Haram does not claim responsibility for such attacks, the modus operandi (bomb attacks routinely targeting locations with no military objective, including markets, transport hubs, bars, restaurants and places of worship) fit the group's methods and targets,
- F. Whereas women and girls are involved in approximately three quarters of the attacks, showing that Boko Haram trains them in the use of explosives, and children are used to carry bombs strapped to their bodies and detonated remotely in public places,
- G. Whereas young women and girls have been abducted, subjected to forced marriage, physical and psychological abuse, forced labour and rape,
- H. Whereas there are reports of children joining CJTF (Civilian Joint Task Force, a group of militants formed in Maiduguri to oust Boko Haram from the city) and other vigilante groups, voluntarily or forcibly, and being used to man checkpoints, gather intelligence and participate in armed patrols,
- I. Whereas in the sub-region (Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Niger) there are at least 208000 children without access to education, 83000 children lacking access to safe waters and in the North East of Nigeria 23000 children who have been separated from their families;
- J. Whereas most of the children living in IDP and refugee camps have lost (either killed or missing) one or both parents as well as siblings and other relatives; whereas, although a number of international and national humanitarian organizations are operating in the camps, the situation of access to basic rights for many of these children, including nutrition, shelter (overcrowded and unsanitary), health and education remain of abysmally low quality
- K. Whereas in the most affected areas health centres have been destroyed and many health workers have fled while others are not able to access those in need because of the security situation, leaving families and children without health services and at risk of dying from diarrhoea, malaria or malnutrition
- L. Whereas cholera begun to spread in August in an internally displaced persons (IDP) camp in Maiduguri and then spread to two of the city's other IDP sites; whereas as of 15 September, 172 cholera cases and 16 deaths have been officially recorded,

- M. Whereas in the affected areas many schools are closed or facing major disruptions of services as teachers and students have been deliberately targeted by armed groups and buildings have been damaged, looted or occupied;
- N. Whereas UNICEF's appeal for its humanitarian response across the lake Chad region remains only 32% funded, thus compromising the delivery of essential services and aid for children, including immunization and access to clean and safe water;
- O. Whereas following Presidential elections, president Buhari pledged to investigate evidence that Nigerian military forces had committed serious human rights violations in the context of the fight against Boko Haram but to date, no investigation has begun
1. Condemns in the strongest possible terms the terrorist group Boko Haram and its guerrilla tactics consisting in raiding villages for supplies, using women and children to bomb soft targets like places of worships, markets and bus stations as well as using kidnapping and raping as weapons of war,
 2. Strongly condemns the recruitment and use of children in the conflict and demands all relevant parties put an end to such practice; calls on the government to take special measures to prevent children being used by vigilante groups and to include child protection in military training and standard operating procedures; believes that in cases of children formerly associated with Boko Haram, or other armed groups, non-judicial measures alternative to prosecution and detention should be considered;
 3. Welcomes Nigerian Armed Forces renewed commitment to continue the ongoing coordinated joint assaults on Boko Haram in the north-east to put an end to Boko Haram guerrillas' operations as well as the recent deployment of the 7th Brigade of the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in order to stop the infiltration of the terrorist elements into the country and its neighbours;
 4. Call upon regional countries participating in military operations against Boko Haram to carry out their operations against the group in compliance with international humanitarian, refugee and human rights law and to take all necessary measures to ensure the protection of children and minimize the impact of the conflict on them; welcomes the fact that child protection provisions have been included in the Multinational Joint Task Force concept of operations,
 5. Calls on Boko Haram to urgently end the deliberate targeting of civilians and to publically condemn all abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law by its members and those who fight on its behalf;
 6. Welcomes President Buhari declarations that reaffirmed his administration's commitment to the rule of law as well as the warning that proven acts of human rights violation by the Armed Forces will be punished under his leadership; urges the government of Nigeria to ensure that in their own operations they take all necessary legal measures to guarantee the security of civilians and their properties in the affected areas as well as the full respect of the rule of law in their counter-insurgency strategy;

7. Calls on the Nigerian Government to launch, as promised by President Buhari, an urgent, independent and through investigation on crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations by all parties to the conflict; in this context reminds that any effort to tackle the insurgency has to be carried out in accordance with the Nigerian Government's obligations under international law,
8. Calls on the Nigerian Government to take steps to strengthen measures to protect civilians, especially the most vulnerable groups like women and children, in the context of the counter-insurgency operations as well as provide remedies for women and girls whose human rights have been violated including, but not limited to, mechanism for nullifying forced marriages, psychological counselling, rehabilitation and social reintegration mechanisms;
9. Calls on the Nigerian government to take measures to facilitate the return of displaced people, especially children, to grant their safety and to assist NGOs in their efforts to improve the conditions of the camps for people displaced by the conflict by, inter alia, improving the hygiene and sanitation in order to prevent the possible spreading of diseases;
10. Urges the Human Rights Council to renew its request for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue regularly reporting to it on human rights abuses and violations committed in countries where Boko Haram operates;
11. Welcomes the work of UNICEF, other UN agencies and local and international non-government organizations in the affected area and calls on further scaling up the humanitarian assistance to children and families affected by the crisis;
12. Is extremely worried by the sever funding shortfall experienced by the actors on the grounds; calls on the international community and donors to increase their contribution for the humanitarian response across the Lake Chad region;
13. Urges the Members states as well as other public and private donors to contribute to the new Trust Fund for Africa; believes this new tool should prioritize interventions to address the needs of uprooted people, especially children, in a variety of sectors (access to basic health care, safe drinking water, child protection and education, nutrition); urges the Trust Fund Operational Committee, given the criticality of the situation, to speed up its decisional process with a view to start projects in the Lake Chad Basin as soon as possible;
14. Welcomes the liberation from Boko Haram's controlled camps of 241 women and children by the Nigerian military but is saddened that, after more than 500 days, the 230 girls kidnapped from a school in Chibok are still missing; urges the government to don't stop and renovate its efforts to find and free them and all other people kidnapped by Boko Haram during the conflict;
15. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Member States, the Federal Government of Nigeria, the institutions of the African

Union, the UN Secretary-General, the UN General Assembly, the Co-Presidents of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly and the Pan-African Parliament.