



Plenary sitting

B8-0049/2018

16.1.2018

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 situation in Nigeria
(2018/2513(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

B8-0049/2018

**European Parliament resolution on the situation in Nigeria
(2018/2513(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on the situation in Nigeria;
- having regard to the previous statements of the Vice President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on the situation in Nigeria;
- having regard to Council Conclusions on the situation in Nigeria, including those of 9 February 2015 and 17 July 2017;
- having regard to the previous statements of the Secretary General of the United Nations on the situation in Nigeria;
- having regard to the Council decision to add Boko Haram to the EU list of designated terrorist organisations, which entered into force on 29 May 2014;
- having regard to the second revision of the Cotonou Agreement 2007-2013, ratified by Nigeria in September 2010;
- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948;
- having regard to the African Charter on Human Rights and Peoples of 1981, ratified by Nigeria in June 1983;
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 1979;
- 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 Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981, ratified by Nigeria in June 1983;
- having regard to the UN 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 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in particular its provisions on the protection of freedom of religion in Chapter IV – Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;
- having regard to the outcome of the Nigerian Presidential elections of March 2015;

- having regard to the conclusions of the European Union Electoral Follow-up Mission of October and November 2017;

- having regard to the Declaration of Commitment to end sexual violence in conflict, adopted at the 68th United Nations General Assembly in September 2013;

- having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure;

A. whereas despite having one of the largest economies in Africa with vast resources, Nigeria ranks as one of the most unequal countries in the world, with widespread corruption contributing significantly to economic and social disparity;

B. whereas years of military dictatorship, corruption, political instability and poor governance have meant insufficient investment in the country's infrastructure and basic services;

C. whereas the peaceful transition to power of President Muhammadu Buhari in March 2015 held out the hope for a renewed focus on economic renewal, efforts to clean up corruption, combat violence and insurgency, and to tackle inequality;

D. whereas those efforts have been undermined by a flagging economy, caused by fluctuating global oil prices, weak political institutions, the failure to tackle corruption, unresolved conflicts in the Niger Delta and in the Middle Belt, and Islamist insurgency in the north;

E. whereas Presidential elections and elections to the Nigerian National Assembly are scheduled to take place in February 2019;

F. whereas the organisation Transparency International ranked Nigeria 136th out of 175 countries in its 2016 Corruption Perceptions Index;

G. whereas peace and stability in Nigeria have been threatened by the wave of attacks, killings, and kidnappings by the Islamist group Boko Haram since 2009; whereas it is estimated that more than 2.3 million people have been displaced and more than 14 million affected by the Boko Haram insurgency;

H. whereas the conflict has increasingly spilled into neighbouring countries, with increased infiltration, suicide-bombings, attacks and recruitment by Boko Haram, prompting population movements from northern Nigeria across borders to Cameroon, Chad and Niger;

I. whereas the conflict has particularly affected vulnerable groups such as women and children, who constitute the majority of displaced persons in Nigeria and its neighbouring countries;

J. whereas Nigeria's 186 million population is evenly split between Muslims and Christians; whereas an estimated 30 million Christians live in northern Nigeria, forming the largest religious minority in the mainly Muslim region;

K. whereas in April 2014 Boko Haram kidnapped 276 girls from their school in Chibok, northern Nigeria; whereas while many have since been reunited with their families more than

100 are still being held and their whereabouts is unknown;

L. whereas the Chibok girls represent a fraction of the women captured by Boko Haram, which has kidnapped thousands during its eight-year insurgency;

M. whereas Nigerian state oil company NNPC recently issued a tender to buy up to 1.55 million tonnes of petrol from January to April 2018 in an effort to stave off shortages that have plagued the country despite its vast oil resources;

N. whereas UNICEF has warned that conflict, drought, displacement, and disease have put 1.4 million children and 20 million people overall at imminent risk of death from severe acute malnutrition in north-east Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen;

O. whereas in 2016 Nigeria handed down 527 death sentences, three times more than in 2015 and the highest recorded globally excluding China;

P. whereas Cameroon has been accused of forcibly returning as many as 100,000 Nigerian refugees escaping Islamist violence, in breach of international agreements;

Q. whereas on 10 January 2018 Nigerian security forces fired tear gas and shot into the air to disperse protestors in Abuja demanding the release of Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, leader of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria, who has been in detention without trial since December 2015;

1. Is deeply concerned by the significant social, economic and political challenges facing Nigeria and encourages President Muhammadu Buhari to fulfil the commitments made during his election campaign to address these issues in the interests of all Nigerians;

2. Regrets the lack of real progress in addressing the corruption which has blighted Nigerian society for decades and believes that without tough action to eradicate such crimes the Buhari government's wider political, economic and social agenda cannot be fulfilled;

3. Calls on the Nigerian Government to strengthen measures to tackle corruption and increase transparency on asset recovery; further welcomes the announcement that more than US\$10 billion in looted money and assets have so far been recovered and offers its support in ongoing measures to recoup more;

4. Believes the fight against corruption must be led by the Nigerian authorities, and warns the Government of Nigeria that the failure to do so will mean more years of poverty, inequality, reputational damage, and reduced external investment, as well as undermining the life opportunities of young people; further offers its support in this objective, and in seeking to break the link between corrupt practices and terrorism;

5. Condemns the ongoing violence in Nigeria which has resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent men, women and children, and displaced millions more;

6. Supports the Nigerian Government in its commitment to defend its citizens from terrorism, but insists that such actions must be conducted in full accordance with the respect for human rights and the rule of law and in cooperation with neighbouring countries;

7. Condemns attacks on schools in northern Nigeria which are denying children educational opportunities and risk fuelling the radicalisation on which terrorist groups like Boko Haram depends;
8. Notes with concern that the security situation across the Lake Chad region, including north-east Nigeria remains precarious, with Boko Haram attacks and counter-insurgency operations by the Nigerian army and the Multi-National Joint Task Force severely impacting the humanitarian situation and restricting humanitarian access;
9. Condemns sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls and the targeting of women and children for abductions, forced marriage, rape, and use as suicide bombers; further expresses concern that inadequate humanitarian assistance in refugee camps has also led to high levels of exploitation and sexual abuse;
10. Condemns the upturn in violence towards Christians in Nigeria, including the targeting of religious institutions and worshippers; further condemns the recent murder of at least 48 Christians in villages across Plateau State during a nine day killing spree by Muslim Fulani herdsmen;
11. Notes that Boko Haram has attacked Muslim, Christian, and other faiths without distinction;
12. Condemns the attack on a mosque in Mubi, north-east Nigeria in November 2017 which killed at least 50 people and injured many more, and calls on President Buhari to ensure his government defends Nigerians' right to worship freely, and protect the rights of all its citizens more widely, in line with the country's laws and constitution;
13. Welcomes the work of the 100 Women Lobby Group in promoting the participation of women in politics in Nigeria, and calls on the Nigerian government to intensify efforts to increase opportunities for women and girls in all sections of society;
14. Notes that despite the country's massive energy resources more than half the people of Nigeria currently live without electricity, and calls for renewed efforts, with international support, to tackle this issue as a vehicle for transforming lives and opportunities;
15. Condemns the December 2017 attack on a humanitarian aid convoy in Borno State in which at least four people were killed and demands that aid workers are guaranteed unfettered access to communities and individuals in need of humanitarian supplies, including food, water, and shelter;
16. Welcomes the support of Nigeria's neighbours in hosting refugees fleeing Islamist violence, but deplores the reported forced repatriation of thousands which could expose them to further attacks and which breach the principles of non-refoulement;
17. Calls on all parties to respect the human rights and freedoms of all citizens in Nigeria, and all those working on peace and humanitarian missions in the country, including aid workers, doctors, and journalists;
18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the

EEAS, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/Vice-President of the European Commission, the parliaments and governments of the Member States, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the chairman of the African Union, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, and the Pan-African Parliament.