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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0065/2020**

14.1.2020

## **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 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on Nigeria, notably the recent terrorist attacks  
(2020/2503(RSP))

**Phil Bennion, Andrus Ansip, Malik Azmani, Stéphane Bijoux, Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, Gilles Boyer, Sylvie Brunet, Catherine Chabaud, Dita Charanzová, Olivier Chastel, Engin Eroglu, Fredrick Federley, Klemen Grošelj, Christophe Grudler, Bernard Guetta, Antony Hook, Ivars Ijabs, Irena Joveva, Ondřej Kovařík, Ilhan Kyuchyuk, Karen Melchior, Shaffaq Mohammed, Javier Nart, Jan-Christoph Oetjen, Urmas Paet, Samira Rafaela, Frédérique Ries, María Soraya Rodríguez Ramos, Susana Solís Pérez, Nicolae Ștefănuță, Ramona Strugariu, Hilde Vautmans, Marie-Pierre Vedrenne, Chrysoula Zacharopoulou**  
on behalf of the Renew Group

**B9-0065/2020**

**European Parliament resolution on Nigeria, notably the recent terrorist attacks (2020/2503(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard having regard to its previous resolutions on Nigeria,
  - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981, ratified by Nigeria on 22 June 1983,
  - having regard to the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in particular the provisions on the protection of freedom of religion contained in Chapter IV on the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion,
  - having regard to the decision to add Boko Haram to the EU list of designated terrorist organisations by means of Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 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, which entered into force on 29 May 2014,
  - 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 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966, ratified by Nigeria on 29 October 1993,
  - having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, ratified by Nigeria in April 1991,
  - having regard to the second revision of the Cotonou Agreement, ratified by Nigeria on 27 September 2010,
  - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
  - having regard to the awarding of the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to human rights defender Hauwa Ibrahim in 2005,
  - having regard to the outcome of the Nigerian presidential elections of February 2019,
  - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. Whereas the U.N. has described the situation in north-east Nigeria as one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, estimating that around 7 million people need assistance; whereas since the start of the fighting between non-state armed Islamist groups and the Nigerian army in 2009, more than 35,000 people have been killed, 2 million people had to flee their homes and thousands of women and girls have been abducted,
- B. Whereas the conflict has led to widespread forced displacement and violations of international humanitarian law; whereas an estimated 2.9 million people do not have enough to eat, close to a million children suffer from malnutrition, and 800,000 children are out of school.
- C. Whereas Muhammadu Buhari won the February 2019 presidential election and is due to stay in power until his second (and final) term expires in 2023;

- D. Whereas Nigeria's military and police are facing a myriad of security threats and appear overstretched and unable to tackle simultaneous security crises;
- E. Whereas the north-east has been suffering from constant attacks from two Islamist terrorist groups, Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP); whereas the area is a stronghold of the ruling party, the All Progressives Congress (APC);
- F. Whereas another hotspot is the agricultural Middle Belt, where Muslim Fulani farmers and largely Christian nomadic herders are in conflict over land and water resources;
- G. Whereas according to the report by Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (HART) published on 18 November 2019 and Christian news outlets reports more than 1,000 Christians have been murdered by Islamic militants in 2019, as part of an aggressive and strategic land-grabbing strategy across the Plateau, Benue, Taraba, Southern Kaduna and parts of Bauchi state; whereas the report also estimates that about 6,000 Christians have been killed by members of the Fulani ethnic group since 2015 and another 12,000 displaced;
- H. Whereas there is no foreseeable end to violence in the Middle Belt; whereas the entire country feels the secondary effects in the form of reduced food supplies and higher prices;
- I. Whereas demands for more hydrocarbons revenue to be retained locally for development in the oil-producing Niger delta has turned into very serious insecurity caused by activities of armed groups and piracy; whereas weak governance in the region has, as a by-product, encouraged oil theft and sabotage of pipelines and other facilities and millions of barrels of oil are lost annually; whereas the continuous deterioration of environment has been a serious consequence of poor management of oil resources in the region;
- J. Whereas attacks on oil infrastructure by aggrieved militants and saboteurs continue to be a major security problem in Delta state, with indirect consequences for the entire federation in the form of disrupted oil exports;
- K. whereas the 1,200 Chadian soldiers deployed since February 2019 in Gajira and Mongono in north-eastern Nigeria officially retired on January 3, 2020 to be deployed in the Chadian side of the Lake Chad region to strengthen security throughout the border, whereas the Nigerian soldiers who worked alongside the Chadians also left, whereas following this withdrawal hundreds of Nigerian civilians installed nearby fled the area fearing of new attacks by the jihadists,
- L. Whereas on 8 January, about 20 soldiers were killed and nearly 1,000 people made homeless in a militant attack on a town in north-eastern Nigeria; whereas Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) claimed responsibility for the attack;
- M. Whereas ISWAP split from Islamist group Boko Haram in 2016 and has since become the region's dominant jihadist group and staged its own frequent attacks in the region;
- N. Whereas on 6 January at least 30 people were killed in the north-eastern Nigerian state of Borno after an improvised explosive device detonated on a bridge; whereas no group immediately took responsibility, but Both Boko Haram and the regional offshoot of Islamic State, the ISWAP, are active in the area;
- O. Whereas ISWAP claimed responsibility for the execution of 11 people in video released on 26 December 2019; whereas the group claimed all those killed were Christians in retaliation for the death of IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in Syria; whereas it has been reported that regional experts expect some of those killed were likely Muslim;

- P. Whereas on 22 December Islamist militants killed at least 10 people and took two women captive in an attack on a convoy in north-eastern Borno state that targeted Christians and those associated with international aid groups; whereas the militants separated those who they determined worked for international aid groups, were Christian or worked with the police or the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), a coalition of civilian vigilante groups formed to fight Boko Haram jihadists.; whereas they opened fire on people associated with these three groups, killing 10, including four who witnesses said had identification cards associating them with humanitarian groups;
- Q. Whereas on 11 January 2020 Boko Haram killed 4 Chadian civilians and kidnapped 5 women in Alom in the Lake Chad region; Whereas on 18 December Boko Haram militants killed 14 Chadian civilians and wounded five others in an overnight attack on a fishermen's' camp in the north-eastern part of Lake Chad; whereas Boko Haram has been fighting for a decade to carve out an Islamist caliphate in northeast Nigeria and has carried out regular raids over loosely guarded borders into neighbouring Chad, Niger and Cameroon;
- R. Whereas on 13 December ISWAP armed group that kidnapped humanitarian workers in north-eastern Nigeria five months ago has claimed it killed four hostages; Whereas seven aid workers have been killed since the beginning of the year, among a total of 26 U.N. and aid workers who have lost their lives in the conflict since 2011;
- S. whereas a terrorist attack by Boko Haram in the north-east of Nigeria in July 2019 claimed the lives of 65 mourners attending a funeral; whereas several civilians were reportedly executed and many more abducted by armed groups between Borno and Yobe states in the last months;
- T. Whereas climate change has led to irregular weather patterns, drought, flooding and crop shortages in Nigeria; whereas these pressures have reduced the availability of arable land for farmers and safe routes for pastoralists, particularly in the Middle Belt; whereas increasing tensions and competition over resources has intensified conflicts in the north-east of Nigeria;
- U. whereas the EU, the Federal Republic of Germany and ECOWAS launched a project on Peace and Security Architecture and Operations (EPSAO) in October 2019; whereas the objective of the project is to strengthen ECOWAS's mechanisms and ability to manage conflict and support a post-conflict environment in West Africa;
1. Strongly condemns the use of violence and terror tactics by any group against another, whether based on religion or ethnicity;
  2. Urges the Nigerian government to pursue justice for those responsible for Boko Haram's killings and end the prolonged detention of thousands of suspects by ensuring them a due process;
  3. Urges the Nigerian government to ensure that counter terrorism operations are conducted in respect for human rights and ensure accountability for past and present violations by security forces, including arbitrary arrests and detention of children;
  4. Urges the Nigerian authorities to immediately end military detention of children and transfer all children to civilian child protection authorities. Nigeria should also sign and implement a UN "handover protocol" to ensure the swift transfer of children from military to civilian custody for family reunification, rehabilitation, and community reintegration. (Other countries in West Africa, including Chad, Mali, and Niger, have signed such protocols);

5. Calls to stop the continued surge of violence in Nigeria, including both communal killings occurring between Muslim Fulani cattle herders and Christian farmers and terrorist attacks made by Boko Haram, ISWAP and other extremist groups;
6. Deplores that inter-ethnic conflicts between cattle herders and farmers in the Middle-Belt region and disputes over land and grazing rights have caused thousands to be killed in the region since 2014;
7. Recalls that Nigeria's population is almost evenly split between Christians and Muslims; reiterates calls for the Government of Nigeria and international partners to intensify efforts to bring the violence to an end and protect religious freedom;
8. Supports the objectives of the Peace and Security Architecture Operations project led by the EU and ECOWAS; encourages strong support from Member States to contribute to capacity-building and conflict resolution in West Africa led by ECOWAS;
9. Recalls that Nigeria's President Buhari was re-elected in 2019 on the promise of defeating violent extremism undertaken by Boko Haram and other terror groups; urges the President to implement his campaign promises to make respect for human rights and humanitarian law a central pillar of Nigerian military operations, addressing the growing problem of malnutrition, and fighting corruption;
10. Urges the Nigerian Government to negotiate a national policy framework that would protect the interests of both farmers and herders and international partners to increase investment in preventing and resolving intercommunal conflicts between cattle pastoralists and farmers by supporting cooperation through shared economic and natural resource management initiatives;
11. Urges the Buhari government to make progress on the on the security challenges facing Nigeria, and in addressing corruption; further offers its support in achieving this objective and in seeking to break the link between corrupt practices and terrorism;
12. Urges the Nigerian government to focus on upholding human rights dignity in all policies to ensure peaceful coexistence amongst citizens irrespective of their religion, believe and political affiliations;
13. Reminds the Nigerian authorities that human rights and humanitarian law must be ensured for all parties during and after military operations; deplores the stalling of progress in the fight against Boko Haram, ISWAP and the increased occurrence and severity of suicide attacks and direct attacks against military positions;
14. Considers any form used to exterminate human beings or ethnic cleansing as barbaric and a crime against humanity; calls on the UN and all international actors to investigate those who incited and perpetrated the ethnic cleansing of pastoralists and the barbaric killing of farmers in the mile belts of Nigeria to be brought to justice;
15. Is concerned by recent population movements due to conflict and for more than 7 million people that are in need of humanitarian assistance in north-east Nigeria;
16. Acknowledges the pressures Nigeria and neighbouring countries are under from regional displacement; calls for increased support for the displaced population in Nigeria, including additional financial resources from the international community; draws particular attention to the financial needs in the region highlighted by UNHCR to provide basic services and increase resilience of refugee populations and the host communities across Nigeria, Niger, Chad and Cameroon; urges the international community to help Nigeria and the

neighbouring countries who host refugees and displaced and to provide all necessary medical and psychological assistance to those in need; calls for additional funding specifically for women and girls as these have been specifically targeted and are facing considerable health damage as a direct result of these terrorist attacks;

17. Calls on the Commission to consider additional funds to boost urgent humanitarian aid to the region and work towards sustainable development and the improvement of the situation of women and girls;
18. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service, 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 President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Chairman of the African Union, the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the Pan-African Parliament and representatives of ECOWAS.