



---

*Plenary sitting*

---

**B9-0215/2023**

18.4.2023

## 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 the risk of death penalty and execution of singer Yahaya Sharif Aminu for blasphemy in Nigeria  
(2023/2650(RSP))

**Pedro Marques, Carlos Zorrinho**  
on behalf of the S&D Group

**European Parliament resolution on the risk of death penalty and execution of singer Yahaya Sharif Aminu for blasphemy in Nigeria (2023/2650(RSP))**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Cotonou Agreement,
  - having regard to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,
  - having regard to Rule 144 of its rules of procedure,
- A. whereas in March 2020 Nigerian singer Yahaya Sharif Aminu circulated song lyrics which were deemed to contain derogatory remarks about the Prophet Muhammad;
- B. whereas in August 2020 Sharif Aminu was tried without legal representation and convicted for blasphemy; whereas he was sentenced by the Upper Sharia court in Kano State to death by hanging;
- C. whereas in January 2021, following an appeal, the appellate courts overturned the conviction due to concerns over lack of due process but ordered a retrial; whereas there are widespread concerns that Sharif Aminu will be re-convicted and sentenced to death;
- D. whereas Sharif Aminu has lodged a case with the Supreme Court of Nigeria challenging the blasphemy law under the Sharia Penal Code of Kano State, arguing it contravenes the Constitution of Nigeria;
- E. whereas the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Nigeria is party, restricts the use of capital punishment to only the most serious crimes; whereas despite this, the death penalty is used in cases of blasphemy in northern Nigerian states under Sharia law;
- F. whereas blasphemy laws in Nigeria and worldwide are in violation of international human rights commitments, and can incite harassment, violence and persecution of minorities; whereas accusations of blasphemy are increasingly prevalent online and stifle freedom of expression and of religion and belief;
1. Calls on the Nigerian authorities to immediately release Sharif Aminu and withdraw the blasphemy charges against him; insists that while he remains in detention his access to legal representation, family visits and medical treatment must be ensured;
2. Urges the Nigerian authorities to uphold the rights to freedom of thought, conscience, religion and expression at the federal level and throughout the country by ensuring state

and Sharia law do not deny Nigerians protection under the national constitution and international conventions; urges the Nigerian authorities in this regard to overturn the blasphemy laws at state and federal level;

3. Calls on the EEAS and European diplomatic personnel in Nigeria to continue to engage with the authorities in Kano State and the Federal Government on the case of Sharif Aminu, to press for his release and for reform of blasphemy laws;
4. Reiterates the EU's strong opposition to the death penalty, in all cases and without exception; urges the Government of Nigeria to immediately withdraw the use of capital punishment for blasphemy, and take steps towards full abolition;
5. Calls for Nigeria to intensify its cooperation with international human rights bodies in order to implement all relevant recommendations and obligations, and continue dialogue on upholding fundamental freedoms;
6. Instruct its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the African Union, and the Government and Parliament of Nigeria.