

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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WRITTEN DECLARATION

pursuant to Rule 116 of the Rules of Procedure

by Urszula Krupa and Witold Tomczak

on recognising media harassment and terrorism as manifestations of violence
constituting an assault on human rights

Lapse date: 14.5.2007

Written declaration on recognising media harassment and terrorism as manifestations of violence constituting an assault on human rights

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 116 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to Article 11 (freedom of expression) and Article 48 (presumption of innocence and right of defence) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union,
- A. whereas one of the objectives of the European Union is to establish an area of freedom, security and justice,
- B. whereas the European media have a tendency to bring uncorroborated and legally unfounded accusations against, and launch persistent attacks on, public figures and even to subject people with uncomfortable beliefs or different political views to media lynching,
- C. whereas some parts of the media act as judge and jury on public figures, denying them any chance to defend themselves and any right to the presumption of innocence,
- D. whereas Pope Benedict XVI was recently the target of attacks and threats and whereas the media have conducted smear campaigns against a Polish archbishop and the priest who founded and heads Radio Maryja, as well as against other clerical and lay figures, without providing any evidence of their guilt,
- 1. Draws attention to the fact that the European Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, liberty, democracy, equality, tolerance, the rule of law and respect for human rights and the right to freedom of religious belief;
- 2. Demands that media harassment and terrorism be recognised as manifestations of violence constituting an assault on EU fundamental rights and on human rights;
- 3. Demands that Member States lay down penalties for media harassment, persecution and violence undermining the dignity of human beings and of the priesthood;
- 4. Instructs its President to forward this declaration, together with the names of the signatories, to the Council, the Commission and the Member States.