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*Plenary sitting*

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**B9-0060/2020**

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))

**Lars Patrick Berg, Dominique Bilde**  
on behalf of the ID Group

**B9-0060/2020**

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

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1976, in particular article 18 thereof,
  - having regard to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 36/55 of 25 November 1981 on the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief,
  - 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 sections 10 and 38 thereof,
  - having regard to the final report and recommendations of Bishop of Truro's Independent Review for the Foreign Secretary of FCO Support for Persecuted Christians of 2019,
  - having regard to US Secretary of State Pompeo's Press Statement titled "United States Takes Action Against Violators of Religious Freedom" of 20 December 2019,
  - having regard to the 2018 report of the United States Commission for International Religious Freedom (USCIRF),
  - having regard to its previous resolutions on Nigeria,
  - having regard to Rule 144 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Boko Haram, and in particular its faction known as Islamic State in West Africa Province (ISWAP), has carried out numerous terrorist attacks in Nigeria in recent months;
- B. whereas the US has placed Nigeria on its Special Watch List (SWL) of States engaged with or tolerating religious persecution in terms of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998;
- C. whereas the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has welcomed the designation by the US, and has also noted the continued incarceration of Leah Sharibu who was held back after her schoolmates were released by their abductors, the Boko Haram terrorist group, following negotiations by the government in 2018, allegedly because she refused to renounce her religion; whereas more than 90% of those detained by terrorists are Christians;

- D. whereas the 2018 USCIRF, which recommended Nigeria’s designation as a country of particular concern, noted that religious freedom trended negatively in 2018 and that “in 12 Muslim-majority northern Nigerian states, federalism has allowed the adoption of Islamic Shari’ah law in the criminal codes. The Nigerian constitution also establishes the roles of customary law and Shari’ah courts for Islamic personal and family law”;
- E. whereas on 13 December 2019, four aid workers from Action Against Hunger (AAH) were executed by ISWAP;
- F. whereas on Christmas Eve 2019, Boko Haram killed seven people and abducted a teenage girl in a raid on a Christian village near the town of Chibok;
- G. whereas on Christmas Day 2019, ISWAP released a video showing the beheading of ten Christians and the shooting of one Muslim;
- H. whereas on Boxing Day 2019, Pope Francis denounced the attacks on Christians by “extremist groups” in West Africa, in particular Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger;
1. Expresses its grave concern about the continued attacks by Islamic terrorist groups in Africa and around the world;
  2. Condemns in the strongest terms the Christmas Eve attack and Christmas Day execution of 11 people;
  3. Emphasises that, according to a recent report commissioned by the UK Secretary of State Jeremy Hunt, at least 80% of persecuted religious believers are Christians;
  4. Endorses Pope Francis’ 2019 Christmas message denouncing the attacks on Christians in West Africa; concurs with the views of Bishop Kukah of Sokoto that the Nigerian government, headed by Muhammadu Buhari, has created the vacuum within which Islamic extremism can flourish;
  5. Reiterates the statement made by the President of the European Council, Charles Michel, that West African states are in the grip of “rampant terrorism” that threatens us all;
  6. Calls on the government of Nigeria to take all necessary steps to fight Islamic terrorism in the country, and the region at large, and to further ensure the separation between the State and church as guaranteed in section 10 the Nigerian Constitution;
  7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the EEAS, the Delegation of the European Union to Nigeria, and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.