

**Question for written answer E-002245/2024**

**to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Urgent measures to protect persecuted Christians

According to the World Watch List 2024 report, 365 million Christians are suffering persecution worldwide. On a global level, one in every seven Christians is being persecuted, and this is one in five in Africa and two in five in Asia. North Korea is the most dangerous country for Christians, followed by Somalia, Libya, Eritrea and Yemen. Nigeria has the highest number of murders (4 118 out of 4 998 overall) and kidnappings (3 300 out of 3 906 overall). In 2023, there were over 14 766 attacks on churches and places of worship, along with violence against Christians and Christian properties.

In 2022, the EP adopted its report on the persecution of religious minorities on the grounds of belief or religion, which drew criticism from the Catholic Church for failing to include important references to the persecution of Christians in the Middle East and Africa. Many of the references, bar one, had been removed.

On 1 October 2024, the UCANEWS Agency reported on the kidnapping of a Christian girl in Pakistan, who had been repeatedly raped by her kidnappers, in just one of many such cases.

The right to freedom of religion, as well as the protection of women and girls, are fundamental values.

Can the Commission therefore say what steps it will take to help the millions of Christians who are being persecuted, and especially women and girls?

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