Resolution on the situation in Iraq and Syria, and the IS offensive, including the persecution of minorities

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in Iraq and Syria, and the IS offensive, including the persecution of minorities.

The resolution was tabled by the ECR, ALDE, S&D, EPP, and Greens/EFA groups.

It firmly **condemned the indiscriminate killings and human rights violations perpetrated by IS** against religious and ethnic minorities and the most vulnerable groups, and the use of executions and sexual violence by IS in Iraq and Syria. It underlined the fact that there should be no impunity for the perpetrators of these acts. Members strongly condemned the murders of the journalists James Foley and Steven Sotloff and the aid worker David Haines by IS, and expressed grave concern for the safety of others still being held captive. They rejected without reservation and considered illegitimate the announcement by the IS leadership that it had established a caliphate in the areas it now controlled, and emphasised that the creation and **expansion of the 'Islamic caliphate' was a direct threat to the security of European countries.**

Funding of IS: Parliament stressed again that IS was subject to the arms embargo and assets freeze imposed by UN Security Council resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011), and called on the Council to consider more effective use of the existing restrictive measures, and in particular to **deny IS the benefits of illicit oil sales or sales of other resources on international markets.** Members were deeply concerned about the assertions that actors in some Member States were engaged in illicit oil trade with IS, asking the Commission whether it could confirm these assertions and, if so, ensure that the illicit oil trade was immediately ended. The EU must impose **sanctions** on all those (governments and public or private companies) involved in the transport, transformation, refinement and commercialisation of oil extracted in IS-controlled areas, together with strict controls on financial flows in order to prevent economic activity and exploitation of tax havens on the part of IS.

International coalition: Members called on the EU Member States to assist the Iraqi and local authorities by all possible means, **including appropriate military assistance**, in containing and repelling the terrorist and aggressive IS expansion. They welcomed the efforts of the United States and of all the other contributing states to support the Iraqi authorities in their fight against IS. They welcomed the call by the USA for an **international coalition against IS,** which was building up, as well as the decision reached by the Arab League on 7 September 2014 to take the necessary measures to confront IS and cooperate with international, regional and national efforts to combat militants in Syria and Iraq, and to endorse UN Security Council resolution 2170 (2014).

Parliament called on all regional actors to do everything in their power to stop all activities by official or private bodies intended to propagate and spread extreme Islamist ideologies. It called on Turkey to clearly and unambiguously commit itself to countering the common security threat posed by IS, and for the EU to facilitate a regional dialogue on the problems facing the Middle East and to include all significant parties, in particular Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Kurds: Parliament welcomed the **decision by individual Member States** to respond positively to the call by the Kurdish regional authorities to urgently provide military material, and called on those Member

States to coordinate their efforts and to implement effective monitoring measures in order to prevent uncontrolled dissemination and the use of military material against civilians.

Protection of vulnerable groups: the international community was asked to assist the Iraqi authorities – including by providing military protection to particularly vulnerable groups – in ensuring protection of those fleeing the areas affected by terrorism, in particular members of vulnerable groups and of ethnic and religious communities. All regional actors, as well as of the EU, must do their utmost to guarantee the **return of traditional minorities and all citizens to their original places of residence** whence they were forced to flee.

|Furthermore, all parties to the conflict in Syria, **in particular the Syrian regime**, must ensure the protection of the civilian population, and facilitate the provision of humanitarian aid and assistance through all possible channels, including across borders and conflict lines, and ensure the safety of all medical personnel and humanitarian workers. Parliament **commended the role of Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey** in accepting refugees. It called on the international community to be **more active and forthcoming in burden-sharing** and to provide direct financial support to the host countries. Parliament welcomed the commitments by the Member States, since the EU was the biggest donor of financial aid and source of future pledges.

Syria: Parliament stressed that in the long term only a lasting and inclusive political solution entailing a peaceful transition to a genuinely representative government in Syria would help to neutralise the threat of IS and other extremist organisations.

Foreign fighters: Members reiterated their concern that thousands of transnational foreign fighters, including citizens of the Member States, had joined the IS insurgency. Members States were called upon to develop a common strategy for security services and EU agencies in monitoring and controlling jihadists and to intensify cooperation and exchange of information among themselves and with EU bodies, and to ensure efficient cooperation with Turkey.

ICC: Parliament reiterated its call for the referral of those suspected of committing crimes against humanity in Syria and Iraq to the International Criminal Court and supported all initiatives in this direction. It remained convinced that there could be no sustainable peace in Syria and Iraq without accountability for the crimes committed by all sides during the conflict, in particular those based on religious or ethnic grounds.