Resolution on recent attacks and abductions by ISIS/Da'esh in the Middle East, notably of Assyrians

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The European Parliament adopted a resolution on recent attacks and abductions by ISIS/Da'esh in the Middle East, notably of Assyrians.

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

Parliament stated that it was shocked and saddened at the brutal actions by ISIS/Da'esh extremists against the Assyrians in Syria and the Copts in Libya. It strongly condemned ISIS/Da'esh and its **egregious human rights abuses that amounted to crimes against humanity and war crimes,** and which could be called genocide. Members were extremely concerned at this terrorist group's deliberate targeting of Christians, Yezidis, Turkmen, Shi'ites, Shabak, Sabeans, Kaka'e and Sunnis who did not agree with their interpretation of Islam, as part of its attempts to exterminate any religious minorities from the areas under its control. There must be no impunity for the perpetrators of these acts and those responsible should be referred to the ICC.

ISIS expansion to other countries: Parliament urged the EU and its Member States to take a proactive and preventive approach towards the threat of ISIS/Da'esh expansion into countries and regions beyond Iraq and Syria. It was extremely concerned about the situation in Libya, not least because of its geographical proximity to the EU as well as to conflict areas in Africa.

Members encouraged cooperation with newly emerging regional and local forces, such as the Kurdish Regional Government in Iraq, and the Syriac Military Council, as well as local self-governing entities in the region which had shown more commitment to human rights and democracy than their countries' rulers. They saluted, in particular, the courage of the Kurdish Peshmerga forces who had done so much to protect endangered minorities.

Financing: Parliament urged the EU and its Member States, as well as NATO partners, to address the issue of certain countries' ambivalent roles in the conflict, in particular where they contribute to the rise of ISIS/Da'esh and other extremist groups. In this context, Parliament referred to the financing of the **dissemination of the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam by public and private entities of countries from the Gulf region**. It called upon these countries to stop this financing, and also asked Turkey to play a positive role and allow Christian minorities and other persecuted people fleeing from Syria to cross the border into Turkey.

Other recommendations: Parliament urged the EU to:

- use well-established networks of local and regional churches, as well as international relief organisations of churches, to provide financial and other assistance, in order to ensure that all minority groups could benefit from the protection and support of European aid;

- start working with international and regional partners on a post-ISIS/Da'esh scenario, taking into account the urgent need for cultural and religious dialogue and reconciliation;

- cooperate with international and local partners to safeguard as much Assyrian and other cultural and religious heritage as possible from the territories occupied by ISIS/Da'esh and also take action against the illicit trade in ancient artefacts coming from these territories;

- further explore counter-terrorism policies, other than those already in place, and continue to work with Member States to enhance policies that counter radicalisation on EU soil, the spreading of hate speech and incitement to violence online.

Parliament believed that in order to stem the suffering and the mass exodus of Christians and other indigenous populations of the region, a clear and unequivocal statement by regional political and religious leaders, in support of their continued presence and full and equal rights as citizens of their countries, was necessary. It urged all UN member states to clearly speak out against the violence and in particular in favour of the rights of minorities.