Resolution on the persecution of Christians around the world, in relation to the killing of students in Kenya by terror group Al-Shabaab

2015/2661(RSP) - 30/04/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 578 votes to 31, with 34 abstentions, a resolution on on the persecution of Christians around the world, in relation to the killing of students in Kenya by terror group Al-Shabaab.

The text adopted in plenary had been jointly tabled by the S&D, ALDE, GUE/NGL, Verts/ALE and EFDD groups.

Parliament condemned in the strongest terms the deliberate terrorist attack perpetrated by Al-Shabaab on 2 April 2015 in Garissa, in which it assassinated 147 young, innocent university students and injured 79 others. It condemned forcefully all violations of human rights, especially when people are killed on the basis of their religion, beliefs or ethnic origin.

The resolution calls on the Kenyan Government to take responsibility and to address both the violence of AlShabaab and its root causes and to make every effort to conform to the rule of law, human rights, democratic principles and fundamental freedoms.

The EU is called upon to lead its international partner in this direction, and to pull together a financial contribution to enhance existing governance programmes, in order to ensure national security and bring peace and stability to the country and the region. It is also invited to implement a military training mission programme in Kenya to fight terrorism and prevent the expansion of Al-Shaba.

Parliament expressed its grave concern over the abuse of religion by the perpetrators of terrorist acts in several areas of the world, and its deep concern at the proliferation of episodes of intolerance, repression and violence directed against Christians, particularly in some parts of the Arab world. It denounced the instrumentalisation of religion in various conflicts, condemned the increasing number of attacks on churches around the world, and reaffirmed its solidarity with all Christians persecuted in different parts of Africa, with special regard to recent atrocities in Libya, Nigeria and Sudan.

The resolution condemned any misinterpretation of the message of Islam to create a violent, cruel, totalitarian, oppressive and expansive ideology, legitimising the extermination of Christian minorities. It urged Muslim leaders to fully condemn all terrorist attacks.

The European Union as well as the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy were called upon to:

- address security and terrorist threats in this regional area in cooperation with the African Union;
- ensure that the issue of the persecution of Christian communities and other religious communities is a priority of the Union;
- ensure that human rights are at the forefront of all the forms of dialogue with third countries in the fight against terrorism;
- strengthen their collaboration with third countries on the exchange of information relating to money laundering in connection with the financing of terrorism.

Lastly, Parliament has reiterated its support for all initiatives aimed at promoting dialogue and mutual respect between the religious communities and other communities. It invited all the religious authorities to promote tolerance and to take initiatives against hate and extremist and violent radicalisation.