Resolution on mercy killings in Uganda

2018/2632(RSP) - 15/03/2018 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on mercy killings in Uganda.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, GUE/NGL and EFDD groups.

As a reminder, ‘mercy killing’ in Uganda is a practice whereby parents of disabled children kill or allow them to die by starving them or denying them medical attention because of the belief that these children are better off dead than having to endure a painful and incurable disability.

Parliament strongly condemned the **unjustifiable and inhumane killing** of children and new-borns with disabilities. It expressed its utmost concern over the ‘mercy killing’ of disabled children in Uganda and all countries affected.

It called, in particular:

- for an **end to such acts of violence**, cruelty and torture towards children;
- for the harmful **superstitious beliefs** perpetuating the targeting of children to be targeted;
- for support for the families of persons with disabilities so that they can raise their children at home;
- for the development of quality support services for the families of children with disabilities throughout the country, including sufficient **financial support and benefits**;
- on the Ugandan Human Rights Commission to develop a **concrete national plan** to promote more structured and institutionalised interaction with all disabled persons’ organisations in the country;
- on the authorities to ensure **registration** of all children at birth, including those with disabilities;
- for strengthened efforts to raise awareness of the rights and dignity of children with disabilities in Uganda.

The Commission and the Member States are invited to support the efforts of the Government, NGOs and civil society of Uganda to formulate and implement policies to address the needs and rights of persons with disabilities, based on non-discrimination and social inclusion, and equal access to healthcare and other social services. A **platform** should also be developed together with other international donors in order to exchange good inclusion practices for children with disabilities.

Parliament called on the EU to take advantage of the political leverage provided by development aid programmes, namely budget support programmes, to enhance the defence and promotion of human rights in Uganda. The Commission should verify if better assistance can be granted, either through funding or coordination with local institutions, to improve medical support to children with disabilities in order to extend urgently needed support to their families.

Lastly, the resolution stressed that inclusion policies should be promoted in all relevant UN and international fora, as the issue of disability is currently absent in many high-level international discussions and must be placed high on the political agenda.