Resolution on the urgent need to protect religious minorities in Syria following the recent terrorist attack on Mar Elias Church in Damascus

2025/2798(RSP) - 10/07/2025 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 625 votes to 7, with 10 abstentions, a resolution on the urgent need to protect religious minorities in Syria following the recent terrorist attack on Mar Elias Church in Damascus.

The text adopted in plenary was tabled by the EPP, S&D, ECR, Renew, Greens/EFA groups and Members.

On 22 June 2025, a suicide terrorist attack on the Mar Elias Greek Orthodox Church in Damascus killed at least 25 and injured over 60, marking the deadliest attack against Christians in years. A newly formed Islamist terrorist group, Saraya Ansar al-Sunna, claimed this attack.

Parliament strongly condemned the traumatic terrorist attack against the Mar Elias Church and all threats against worship sites, some historically significant. It urged the Syrian authorities to improve safety measures and restore the Mar Elias Church.

Moreover, Members strongly condemned all attacks targeting religious and ethnic communities. They also noted with concern that many Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) members with grave human rights violation records have assumed roles within the transitional administration, with potentially worrying implications for religious freedom. In this regard, Parliament urged the Syrian transitional authorities to facilitate swift, transparent and independent investigations into these acts and to take the necessary measures to suppress violence, ensure that those responsible for the attacks are held accountable, defend freedom of religion, and ensure the protection of all communities.

The Syrian transitional authorities are called on to present a specific timeline for organising credible, free, fair and inclusive elections. Whereas the EU is called on to set up a Syria reconstruction fund, conditional on demonstrable progress on these priorities and in coordination with relevant international institutions, that would promote interfaith dialogue, conflict resolution and reconciliation. The European Commission is urged to give priority to the Conference with Syrian civil society.

Lastly, Parliament called on the Council to maintain and impose more targeted sanctions on actors responsible for religious freedom violations in Syria.