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Violence against the Christian community in northern Nigeria

Written declaration No. 531

This written declaration commits only those who have signed it

In recent months a series of attacks and related violence against the Christian community has escalated in northern Nigeria. Attacks have increased in June 2012, when bombs exploded during Sunday celebrations in different cities.

The terrorist organization Boko Haram, which uses the Islamic religion for subversive and violent purposes, has a declared aim of establishing a new “Caliphate” based exclusively on Sharia.

Anti-Christian terrorist infiltrations have spread in many countries of the area and Nigeria gave certain evidence to the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) of relationships between Boko Haram, Al Qaeda organisations in Maghreb and Salaphite movements in the region.

The attacks and tragic violence against Christian believers, children and women have caused worldwide astonishment and indignation. The European Union High Representative for Foreign Policy, Catherine Ashton, made a statement in this regard on 18 June 2012. The European Union Foreign Affairs Council discussed anti-Christian violence at its meeting on 25th June.

The Parliamentary Assembly should raise its voice against these tragic and seemingly unceasing facts and call on member States of the Council of Europe to act in the direction already indicated in Assembly Resolution 1846 (2011) and Recommendation 1987 (2011) on combating all forms of discrimination based on religion.

The undersigned invite those involved in weekly attacks to consider self-defence as the last instrument, which should never be disproportionate, preventive and excessive.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed ¹:

VOLONTÈ Luca, Italy, EPP/CD
AGIUS Francis, Malta, EPP/CD
AGRAMUNT Pedro, Spain, EPP/CD
ALIGRUDIĆ Miloš, Serbia, EDG
BONDARENKO Olena, Ukraine
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CONNARTY Michael, United Kingdom, SOC
DARCHIASHVILI David, Georgia
FALZON Joseph, Malta, EPP/CD
FRUNDA György, Romania
GABASHVILI Giorgi, Georgia
GRUBER Attila, Hungary, EPP/CD
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VIROLAINEN Anne-Mari, Finland, EPP/CD
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Total = 37

1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialist Group
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democrat Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group