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Violence against the Christian community in northern Nigeria

Written declaration No. 531

This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

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:

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AGIUS Francis, Malta, EPP/CD
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ALIGRUDIĆ Miloš, Serbia, EDG
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Total = 35

1. EDG: European Democrat Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party