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Death penalty in Nigeria

Greens/EFA motion for a resolution

Tabled by ***Marie-Hélène Aubert, Margrete Auken***

on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ratified on 29 October 1993,
- having regard to the African Charter on Human and People's rights, ratified on 22 June 1983,
- having regard to the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, ratified on 23 July 2001,
- having regard to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, ratified on 28 July 2001,
- having regard to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratified on 13 June 1985 and its Optional Protocol on 22 November 2004,
- having regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified on 19 April 1991,
- having regard Rule 115(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas more than 720 men and 11 women are under sentence of death in Nigeria's prisons,
- B. whereas most of those sentenced to death are poor and more than half of the convictions are based on a confession – in many cases, extracted under torture,
- C. whereas, although international law prohibits the use of the death penalty against child offenders, at least 40 death row prisoners were aged between 13 and 17 at the time of their alleged offence,
- D. whereas 47% of death row inmates are waiting for their appeal to be concluded, a quarter of

prisoners' appeals have lasted 5 years, 6% of prisoners with appeals outstanding have waited more than 20 years, one prisoner has spent 24 years on death row,

- E. whereas Nigeria's criminal justice system is riddled with corruption, negligence and a significant lack of resources,

- F. whereas torture, although prohibited in Nigeria, occurs on a daily basis and almost 80% of inmates in Nigerian prisons say they have been beaten, threatened with weapons or tortured in police cells,

- G. whereas many prisoners awaiting trial and on death row are being subject to extortion by police officers, who ask them for money to release them,

- H. whereas the Nigerian authorities made some attempts to address the failures of the judicial system, whereas the 2004 National Study Group on Death Penalty and the 2007 Presidential Commission on the Administration of Justice expressed doubts that the death penalty lowered the degree and intensity of crime in Nigeria, however, neither the federal nor state governments have taken action to address the urgent problems highlighted by two study groups,

- I. whereas only 7 of the African Union's 53 member states are known to have carried out executions in 2007, 13 African countries are abolitionist in law and a further 22 are abolitionist in practice,

- J. whereas in 1977, just 16 countries had abolished the death penalty for all crimes; whereas today, 137 out of 192 UN member states have abolished the death penalty in law or in practice,

- 1. Calls on the Federal Government of Nigeria and State Governments in Nigeria to abolish the death penalty;

- 2. Calls on the Federal Government of Nigeria and State Governments in Nigeria, pending abolition, to declare an immediate moratorium on all executions as provided by UN General Assembly resolution 62/149 and commute without delay all death sentences to terms of imprisonment;

- 3. Urges the Federal Government of Nigeria and State Governments in Nigeria to remove all provisions in both federal and state legislation which provide for death penalty for people under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged crime;

- 4. Calls on the Federal Government of Nigeria to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture;

- 5. Urges the State Governments in Nigeria to remove all provisions which provide for mandatory death sentences;

- 6. Calls on the EU Council, Commission and Member States to provide technical support to them to review legislation which provides for death penalty, with a view to abolishing the death penalty;

- 7. Calls on the EU Council, Commission and Member States to provide technical support to Nigerian authorities to improve the investigation procedures of the Nigeria Police Force;

- 8. Instructs its President to forward the present resolution to the Commission, the Council, the

Member States, the Federal Government of Nigeria and African Union.

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Publication



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18.10.2026

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[Human Resources Management System]

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[Heads of national delegations in the GREENS/EFA Group]

11.03.2025

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