

(English version)

Question for written answer E-000338/26
to the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Paolo Borchia (P/E)
(28 January 2026)

Subject: Violations of religious freedom and protection of Christian communities

Freedom of religion or belief is a fundamental right enshrined in Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. According to numerous international reports, Christians are one of the most persecuted religious groups in the world, subjected to serious violations including kidnappings, killings, destruction of places of worship and systematic discrimination. Yet another serious incident recently took place in Nigeria, where armed gangs kidnapped worshippers.

Given that the European Union has political, economic and cooperation relationships with countries where such persecution is widespread:

1. What concrete actions will the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative take to strengthen the protection of persecuted Christians around the world, including through the common foreign and security policy?
2. Will she make cooperation agreements and development aid conditional on effective respect for religious freedom?
3. What urgent steps will she take to ensure protection for religious minorities and the prosecution of perpetrators?

Submitted: 28.1.2026

Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Kallas on behalf of the European Commission
(20 March 2026)

The promotion and protection of freedom of religion or belief is one of the key priorities of the EU's international human rights agenda.

The EU addresses violations of this human right through presenting resolutions at the United Nations' human rights fora; condemning any discrimination, persecution, hatred or violence against any person based on religion or belief; reaching out to partner countries and international organisations, including through bilateral human rights dialogues; and funding projects outside the EU to improve the respect, protection and fulfilment of this human right.

Human rights clauses are an essential element of the EU's cooperation and trade agreements with partner countries. Based on standard clauses in all EU contracts, where human rights violations occur, funding can be suspended or terminated.

The European External Action Service and the Commission follow closely the human rights situation in third countries, not least through the extensive network of EU Delegations across the world, and work for improving the protection of human rights of all people worldwide.

When violations of human rights occur, including attacks against persons belonging to religious minorities, the EU uses all available diplomatic tools, including private and public and quiet diplomacy, instruments established in the international agreements and autonomous restrictive measures, as appropriate.
