

**Question for written answer E-006286/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Hugues Bayet (S&D)

Subject: Freedom of expression in Turkey

On 29 July 2014, the Turkish deputy prime minister, Bülent Arinç, stated that women 'should not laugh in public'. In recent months Mr Arinç has repeatedly condemned TV series and programmes that, according to him, encourage sex addiction and he believes that Turkish women must remain 'decent'.

These comments on the status of women in Turkey have sparked an outcry among women, whether celebrities or ordinary members of the public, in the media and on social networking sites.

In March 2014, President Erdogan had already imposed a ban on using social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter.

The two incidents clearly illustrate the Turkish Government's desire to restrict freedom of expression, in violation of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

1. Does the Commission intend to raise the issue of these statements with the Turkish authorities?
2. Does the Commission agree that, as a candidate country, Turkey should be reminded that these statements go against Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which safeguards freedom of expression?