

Question for written answer E-008681/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Javier Couso Permuy (GUE/NGL)

Subject: VP/HR - Defence of human rights in Colombia

In recent weeks a number of human rights organisations have warned about the deteriorating situation in Colombia and the reduction of protective measures.

There is particular cause for concern about the situation of lawyer Jorge Molano and the NGO Corporación Sembrar, who are handling some of the country's most emblematic human rights cases, including that of the Palace of Justice and cases of extrajudicial killings. Since January 2013, the National Protection Unit (UNP) has classified the risk to them as exceptionally high. Because of the failure to apply protective measures and following a series of serious security threats, the human rights defenders suspended their legal work. The UNP subsequently agreed to provide physical protection, but on 22 September 2014 Jorge Molano was forced to return the armoured vehicle provided to him, due to lack of fuel (which the UNP is supposed to provide) and the Unit's refusal to provide protection in the cities where he had to attend court hearings. Although Mr Molano has not given up the project, his bodyguards were informed on 30 September that their contract had expired.

Is the Vice President / High Representative aware of this situation and the threats endangering the lives of these human rights defenders?

Does she intend to make public her concern and ask for all the agreed protective measures to be restored?