

Question for written answer E-001169/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Freedom of expression in Iraq

The Iraqi Interior Ministry has banned 12 TV channels (local and other Arabic-language) in the country, considering them to be forums for inciting terrorism. Among these channels are some of the best-known Arabic-language news networks, such as al-Jazeera and al-Arabiya.

In April 2014, UNESCO representative to Iraq Axel Plathe expressed the organisation's concern over the deteriorating state of freedom of expression and the safety of journalists in Iraq. While Iraq's constitution protects freedom of speech and expression, the political authorities continue to use the penal code to prosecute journalists for a variety of offences, including libel and defamation.

What measures do the High Representative and the EU intend to take in order to urge the Iraqi government to protect journalists and freedom of information ?