

Question for written answer E-002738/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Detention of the mayor of Caracas and the human rights situation in Venezuela

I have repeatedly raised with the Vice President and High Representative my concern about the human rights situation and fundamental liberties in Venezuela. On 19 February, one year after the detention of another opponent Leopoldo López, the mayor of Caracas, Antonio Ledezma, was arbitrarily detained (including physical abuse and humiliation), whilst at the same time the country's President, Nicolás Maduro, made accusations against him using a media blackout.

1. In view of the fact that increasing numbers of opponents are being deprived of their freedom, and the media are having more difficulty exercising freedom of expression, can the High Representative explain what the differences are between the current government of Venezuela and a dictatorship?
2. Apart from statements reiterating the High Representative's opinion, which I believe to be necessary, does the Commission plan to take any other kind of measure to restore respect for human rights in Venezuela?
3. Could the time have come to push for a meeting of the Council, based on Article 15 of the TEU, to adopt a Common Position on the approval of measures against Venezuela, including economic sanctions on members of the Chávez regime?