

**Question for written answer E-005466/2015**  
**to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**  
Rule 130  
**Lola Sánchez Caldentey (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: VP/HR - Human Rights in Guatemala

In Guatemala there is a tendency to pass strict laws that criminalise the activities of human rights defenders, such as the 'Ley de Tumulos' (Traffic Circulation and Obstruction of Roads Law) and the 'Ley de Terrorismo Comercial' (Commercial Terrorism Law), which is currently under debate in the Congress of the Republic of Guatemala. The competent public authorities, such as the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Congressional Human Rights Commission, should systematically release legal opinions on any draft legislation that could affect human rights. The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights and UDEFEGUA denounce the fact that in Guatemala human rights defenders are persistently denied justice. What is most striking is how the legal cases against them are processed with speed and efficiency whilst the legal claims lodged by human rights defenders in defence of their own rights remain unanswered.

Is the EU going to call on the Guatemalan authorities to both put an end to the practice of criminalising human rights defenders in Guatemala and implement public policies to protect defenders in collaboration with civil society?