

Question for written answer E-005512/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Expulsion of activists from Western Sahara

In expelling the two Swedish human rights activists Julia Friden and Josefina Hasselberg from Western Sahara on 8 March, the Moroccan Government has once again ignored calls from around the world to put an end to the restrictions and prohibition on freedom of movement which diplomats, parliamentary delegations, NGO representatives and journalists currently face in this territory. This attitude amounts to a flagrant violation of the Western Sahara's legal status, since it is recognised by the UN as a non-autonomous territory under Spanish administration and therefore Morocco cannot claim any jurisdiction over it. Morocco's sole aim is to put fear into both foreign and Sahrawi human rights defenders and conceal the fact that it is systematically infringing Sahrawis' human rights in maintaining its illegal presence on this territory which is pending decolonisation.

1. Will the VP/HR be seeking an explanation from the Moroccan Government as to the expulsion of the Swedish citizens Julia Friden and Josefina Hasselberg from Western Sahara?
2. Will the Community institutions be supporting measures to ensure the free circulation of independent observers in Western Sahara?