

**Question for written answer E-005739/2015  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**  
Rule 130  
**Barbara Matera (PPE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Malaysia: five members of the national press arrested

In Malaysia freedom of expression has been highly restricted by a series of repressive laws. In August last year the authorities increased the severity of penalties relating to the right of expression, using the law on sedition (anti-riot) to investigate, incriminate and imprison defenders of human rights, opposition politicians, journalists and students.

On 31 March 2015 the Malaysian police arrested three journalists and two managers of a publishing group on charges of rioting.

Among those arrested was Ho Kay Tat, manager and managing director of The Edge Media group, and executive director of the news portal 'The Malaysian Insider'.

A lawyer for the Malaysian Communications Commission has stated that the journalists were arrested for having breached the anti-riot laws and the communication and multimedia laws, which punish the improper use of the web to spread content that is 'obscene, false, indecent, offensive or menacing'.

According to Human Rights Watch, the Malaysian Government considers criticism in the same way it considers crimes which are a threat to the State.

Given the above, can the High Representative say:

1. whether she is aware of the laws in Malaysia which suppress the transmission of information in the country;
2. how the EU intends to persuade the Malaysian institutions, through diplomatic channels, to amend their anti-riot laws?