

**Question for written answer E-006185/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Jørn Dohrmann (ECR)

Subject: Cybercrime and blasphemy vs free speech

About 30 % of countries, accounting for nearly two-thirds of the world's population, have highly restrictive blasphemy laws that can result in prison or death sentences.

These laws are being used to target social media activists, particularly in countries without an independent press, where they play the role of journalists. Saudi Arabia in 2014 sentenced blogger Raif Badawi to 1 000 lashes and ten years in prison on charges of insulting Islam and apostasy.

This exposes journalists, activists and others to prosecution for engaging in standard reporting and commentary. Such deliberate ambiguity enables illiberal democracies to equate such speech with terrorism or crime and serves the interests of authorities seeking to restrict criticism and dissent.

What actions is the Commission taking to prevent cybercrime and blasphemy laws from being used to stifle dissent in countries with authoritarian regimes?