

**Question for written answer E-009134/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Francisco Assis (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - Political persecution of the Angolan journalist Rafael Marques

In 2011 the Angolan journalist Rafael Marques de Morais published a book entitled *Diamantes de Sangue* (Blood diamonds) exposing human rights violations in his country's diamond-mining areas and he also filed a petition for the prosecution of the persons alleged to have perpetrated them. In 2014 seven generals formally accused him of libel. Although numerous irregularities occurred during the trial, the two parties agreed that the defence would not call witnesses or present evidence, and all of the charges were withdrawn. On 28 May, however, to his surprise, the Luanda Provincial Court sentenced Rafael Marques to a suspended six-month prison term and ordered the book to be withdrawn from the market.

Apparently, Angolan law is being manipulated to restrict freedom of expression and block further investigation, bearing in mind that, because of the court ruling, the threat that his prison sentence will be enforced will be hanging over the journalist for the next two years.

In view of this situation, which amounts to outright political persecution:

What steps will the EU take to ensure that Rafael Marques's freedom of expression is fully respected and the rule of law upheld?