

**Question for written answer E-009718/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Criminalisation of homosexuality in Tunisia

Tunisia has made significant democratic progress in recent years. Nevertheless, there has been no such progress in relation to LGBTI rights. Tunisia still criminalises homosexuality and classes 'sodomy' as a punishable offence in its Penal Code.

This legislation led to a Swedish citizen receiving a two-year prison sentence some months ago, and the politician Munir Baâtur was imprisoned in 2013 on similar charges.

The new Tunisian government and the growing scale of cooperation between the EU and Tunisia represent an opportunity to achieve the decriminalisation of homosexuality, as already called for by the United Nations Human Rights Council but rejected by the previous government.

In view of the criminalisation of homosexuality in Tunisia and bearing in mind that the EU's bilateral relations must encompass human rights and thus LGBTI rights:

1. What importance is being attached to LGBTI rights in the VP/HR's relations with the Tunisian authorities?
2. What steps will the VP/HR take with a view to promoting the decriminalisation of homosexuality in Tunisia?
3. Will the VP/HR launch a dialogue with local NGOs, such as Shams and the Tunisian Association to Support Minorities, with a view to acquiring information on the state of LGBTI rights and assessing possible courses of action?