

Question for written answer E-010105/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
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Subject: VP/HR - Criminalisation of homosexuality in Morocco

On 3 June 2015, two Moroccan gay men, Lahcen and Mohsine, were arrested for violating 'public modesty' because they stood too close to each other for a touristic photo at the Hassan Tower esplanade in Rabat. Under Article 489 of the Moroccan Penal Code, which punishes anyone who practices 'a deviant act with a person of the same sex', they could face up to three years' imprisonment: they are due to be tried on 19 June.

This case has drawn the attention of the international community to the criminalisation of homosexuality in Morocco, since the arrest took place at a time when the equality debate is polarising society. On 25 May, three men charged with homosexuality received the maximum punishment of three years in jail.

Will the VP/HR urgently intercede with the Moroccan authorities with a view to the withdrawal of the charges against Lahcen and Mohsine and all Moroccans arrested and convicted for being gay?

What measures will the VP/HR take with regard to the first priority, namely 'decriminalisation and combating discriminatory laws', of the LGBTI Guidelines adopted by the Council in 2013?

Will the VP/HR remind the Government of Morocco that its promises of modernisation of the Penal Code are not compatible with the criminalisation of homosexuality?