

**Question for written answer E-010503/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Lorenzo Fontana (ENF)

Subject: VP/HR - Pastors in South Sudan

In December 2014 and January 2015 the Sudanese authorities detained two South Sudanese pastors in Khartoum.

Pastor Michael Yat and Pastor Peter Yen Reith were arrested in December 2014 and January 2015 respectively. They are being detained and have been charged by the Prosecutor for State Security. They have been accused of multiple offences under Sudan's Criminal Act 1991, including undermining the constitutional system (Article 50) and espionage (Article 53), which carry the death penalty as well as blasphemy (Article 125) which is punishable by whipping.

An NISS expert presented evidence on 25 June 2015, although there was no new information in the evidence that was presented. The judge has set the next court date for 2 July 2015. On that day the judge will question the pastors and then decide whether the case will continue to trial or whether it will be dropped.

On 4 June 2015, the two pastors were moved to the high security Kober prison and have since been denied visits from their family and their lawyer. Since the previous court date of 18 June 2015, they are no longer being held in leg shackles.

Will the EU High Representative clarify this situation and promote justice?