

Question for written answer E-011375/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Backward slide in reform of the new Moroccan Penal Code

In Morocco, reforming the Penal Code was supposed to be the culmination of the political movement towards democracy and respect for human rights announced by King Mohamed VI in 2011. However, human rights organisations have condemned the draft law, which maintains the death penalty and the criminalisation of blasphemy, extra-marital sexual relations, homosexuality and breaking the Islamic fasting period, among other things, as indicating a backward slide towards reactionary and restrictive approaches that violate the very spirit of the 2011 liberal constitution. Instead of taking steps to correct this, the government has recently tolerated extremist attitudes that go against freedom of expression, including attacks on women for wearing skirts and the lynching of a homosexual. As a result, a large sector of society has mobilised in protest, holding demonstrations, such as those held on 6 July 2015 in Morocco's main cities, in defence of individual freedoms.

Will the VP/HR demand that the Moroccan Government keep its promises regarding democratic progress, and remind it that respect for individual freedoms is an essential part of a true democracy?

How does the VP/HR believe that approval of the new Penal Code will affect relations between the EU and Morocco?