

Question for written answer E-012204/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - recent VP/HR visit to Morocco

During her first official visit to Morocco, the High Representative placed a great deal of emphasis on the strategic importance of good EU-Morocco relations.

As Ms Mogherini herself pointed out, Morocco's cooperation on issues such as security, the fight against terrorism and managing migration and the role the country has to play in the pacification of Libya are vital to maintaining stability in the Mediterranean, which has become one of the most conflict-ridden areas of the world. Morocco also has a key role to play in stemming the tide of chaos and discontent caused by human rights violations and assaults on fundamental freedoms. Morocco itself is doing little to maintain peace by violating international law through its occupation of the Western Sahara, which is stirring up a wave of unrest and, as the Secretary-General of the UN recently pointed out, posing a serious threat to the fragile peace in the region. Ahead of her visit, organisations such as the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) called on Ms Mogherini to discuss with Moroccan leaders the worrying anti-democratic developments in the country, in particular the attacks on freedom of expression and human rights activists and, above all, the persecution of the journalist Ali Lmrabet.

1. In her talks with the Moroccan authorities, did the High Representative emphasise the need to resolve the conflict in Western Sahara in accordance with international law, which requires Morocco to uphold the Saharaoui people's right to self-determination?
2. Did the High Representative discuss with Moroccan leaders the need to put an end to attacks on freedom of expression and, in particular, did she raise the case of Ali Lmrabet?