

**Question for written answer E-012622/2015  
to the Commission  
Rule 130  
José Blanco López (S&D)**

Subject: Combating slavery in Mauritania

Mauritania was one of the last countries to abolish slavery and did not classify it as a crime until 2007. According to various human rights organisations, thousands of people in Mauritania are enslaved (some put the figure at 20 % of the total population). This is the biggest slavery problem known of and people who challenge this illegal practice are even arrested and tortured.

Is the Commission aware of this situation?

How is it responding to this situation and working to free political prisoners?

Does it believe these facts could affect bilateral relations between Mauritania and the EU?