

**Question for written answer E-001727/2016
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Norica Nicolai (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Crimes against minorities in the Middle East

In the Report on the Protection of Civilians in the Armed Conflict in Iraq: 1 May – 31 October 2015, recently published jointly by the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UN estimates that the terrorist organisation ISIS is holding around 3 500 people, most of whom are women and children, captured for the purpose of sexual slavery in Northern Iraq. The report finds that the majority of these women and children belong to the religious Yezidi minority community.

Will the VP/HR and the Foreign Affairs Council issue a statement declaring that the elimination and killing of ethnic and religious minorities, in particular members of the Yezidi community, should be recognised as genocide?

The Foreign Affairs Council has previously stated that it is cooperating with the UN Human Rights Council in investigating the crimes committed against civilians in Iraq and Syria. What is the status of this investigation, and will it result in the Council of the EU taking concrete actions to hold the perpetrators accountable?