

Question for written answer E-003563/2016
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Javier Couso Permuy (GUE/NGL)

Subject: VP/HR - Poligrow

Colombian and international organisations are complaining of abuses by Poligrow, an Italian-Spanish palm company, in the Colombian municipality of Mapiripán.

The Interchurch Justice and Peace Commission also alleges that its members and prominent land activists, for example William Aljure, are being harassed by members of paramilitary and police forces operating in areas where Poligrow is based.

The investigations into Poligrow are making no headway, but one investigation which is – worryingly – being taken forward concerns Abilio Peña, a human rights defender from the Justice and Peace Commission, who has been summoned to a conciliation hearing on 26 May, following a complaint against him by Carlo Vigna of Poligrow. It is striking that this investigation is being pursued even though no evidence has been adduced in support of the complaint. Another disturbing fact is that the hearing will not be held in public, and a case against a human rights defender is thus being placed outside the scrutiny of international observers.

Is the EU delegation aware of the complaints against Poligrow? Is any action being taken in response to the complaint against Abilio Peña? Will the delegation recommend that the hearing be held in public, and will it comply with EU guidelines on human rights defenders by attending itself?