

**Question for written answer E-000339/2017
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Barbara Matera (PPE)

Subject: VP/HR - indoctrination of child soldiers in Iraq

'For revenge': such were the words of a boy called 'Daoud' after the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) swept into Iraq's Sinjar district in August 2014, killing thousands of adherents of the Yazidi religious minority and taking thousands more captive.

Daoud's family managed to flee, taking an escape route opened up by the People's Defence Forces, the armed wing of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). Those forces offered training and weapons to a Yazidi militia, the Sinjar Resistance Units. Six months later, Daoud joined the militia. He was 15 years old.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) has documented 29 cases in which armed groups linked to the PKK had recruited children in Sinjar and in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, even though the group's commanders had pledged to end the practice.

The PKK leadership should clearly denounce this, and affiliated armed groups should demobilise all children in their ranks.

1. What can be done by the EU to put pressure on the PKK to end the use of child soldiers?
2. Does the EU have any plan to ensure psychological support for any retired child soldier?
3. How can the EU work more closely with the Government of Iraq and with local NGOs in order to take firmer action against the use of child soldiers in Iraq?