

**Question for written answer E-003632/2017  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

**Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL), João Pimenta Lopes (GUE/NGL) and João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: VP/HR - Trial of Sahrawi political prisoners from Gdeim Izik

The trial of the Sahrawi political prisoners from Gdeim Izik commenced on 26 December, continuing in January, March and May, the fifth session being due to commence on 5 June.

These proceedings can only be regarded as politically motivated. No actual evidence has been produced and at the same time there is no presumption of innocence, the charges being based on statements signed under duress following severe torture, as evidenced by the latest ruling of the UN Committee against Torture in December 2016.

The ruthlessness of the Moroccan authorities has been amply demonstrated by their refusal to allow two French defence lawyers to plead or even enter the court for the last session. One of them was physically assaulted and subsequently registered a complaint in France.

Following further infringements, the lawyers withdrew their services. Despite this, the trial is to go ahead with new officially appointed lawyers, with no break in proceedings to allow them to consult or even contact their 'clients'.

What view does the High Representative take of this situation, in the light of the EU-Morocco Association Agreement and what action has she taken, or will take, to ensure compliance with international laws and regulations currently in force?