

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1419/04

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to the Commission

Subject: Violation of the rule of law in Syria and arrest of Mr Aktham Naisse

On 13 April Mr Aktham Naisse, lawyer and president of the Committee for the Defence of Democratic Liberties and Human Rights in Syria (CDF), was arbitrarily arrested by the Syrian military security services for engaging in non-violent pro-human-rights activities.

The secrecy surrounding Mr Naisse's detention represents a violation of the international humanitarian human rights standards of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

This latest arrest coincides with the publication by the CDF of its annual report denouncing the flagrant human rights violations perpetrated in Syria.

Does the Commission intend:

- to exert pressure on the Syrian government, particularly on Mr Ali Hammud, Minister of the Interior, with a view to the immediate release of Mr Aktham Naisse and to ending the harassment to which human rights activists are subject in Syria;
- to take action to ensure that the Syrian authorities comply with the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders adopted on 9 December 1998 by the United Nations General Assembly, particularly Article 1 thereof, and the International Pact on Civil and Political Rights;
- to promote measures with a view to reestablishing the rule of law in Syria, which is constantly violated by the state of emergency that was established by the law of 8 March 1962 and that has hence been in force in Syria for 41 years?