

**Question for written answer E-003415/2013  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)  
Rule 117  
Jürgen Klute (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: VP/HR - Follow-up to the Curuguaty case

In previous replies to inquiries regarding Paraguay's Curuguaty events and the handling of these by the relevant authorities, the Vice-President / High Representative has declared that the legal process against the 14 peasants is being followed and reported by the EU delegation in Asuncion. Attention to this matter is of the utmost importance, since the events that took place in Curuguaty on 15 June 2012 were the direct cause of the political trial against former president Fernando Lugo and of his subsequent impeachment.

However, many aspects of the legal procedure raise doubts as to whether minimum compliance with due process has been observed. We are particularly concerned that:

- the public prosecutor responsible for this case (Jalil Rachid) is a close friend of the Riquelme family: his father was an intimate friend of Blas Riquelme, who claims ownership of the disputed Marina Cue lands;
- Mr Rachid himself stated during a press conference that he had not been able to find out who killed the policemen, but had decided to indict the 12 croppers because 'it was very clear that the police were ambushed'<sup>1</sup>;
- in clear contravention of the code of judicial procedure, the Marina Cue defendants have been held in preventive imprisonment despite the fact that no evidence has been produced which could reasonably support the assumption that they were the perpetrators of the offence.

So far this trial has cost the life of Vidal Vega, a key witness for the defence who was murdered, and has put in jeopardy the lives of several of the accused who went on hunger strike.

In view of the serious doubts as to impartiality, independence and the right to a fair trial raised by the above, and the apparent inability on the part of the Paraguayan authorities to adopt a different course of action, does the Vice-President / High Representative not think it essential that the EU encourage the sending of an international mission to attempt to shed light on the Curuguaty massacre, which has done such serious damage to democracy in Paraguay?

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.elnuevoherald.com/2013/03/13/1429847/paraguay-piden-atencion-para-presas.html>