

Question for written answer E-003654/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Michał Tomasz Kamiński (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - Destruction of Christian heritage in Syria

In December 2013, after occupying the city of Maaloula, an area that includes two of oldest Syrian monasteries and an important religious centre for eastern Christians, Syrian rebels are selling items originating from eastern orthodox churches in this area on internet auction sites. Antique, centuries-old liturgical books, icons, crosses and candlesticks have been put on sale. Other eastern orthodox places of worship have also been disrespected. There have been acts of vandalism, arson and desecration of holy relics. In many cases, UNESCO World Heritage sites have been damaged and plundered.

What is the High Representative's view of the attacks by Muslim rebels in Syria on Christian heritage and other places of importance from a historical perspective – ancient buildings and even entire towns subject to destruction and looting? Is the EU taking any action to protect them?