

Question for written answer E-004120/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Marietje Schaake (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Ethiopian Government using European technology to spy on population and diaspora

On 1 April 2014, Human Rights Watch released a report about how the Government of Ethiopia spies on its citizens and the Ethiopian diaspora in Europe¹. The report documents how the Ethiopian Government uses European technologies to infiltrate the computers of Ethiopians in Ethiopia and also in other countries. The uncontrolled export of surveillance and intrusive technologies has been a gaping hole in EU legislation for a long time, and neither the last update to the dual-use regulation nor the recent update to the Wassenaar Arrangement have been sufficient to close that hole.

1. How does the VP/HR assess the report by Human Rights Watch?
2. Does the VP/HR agree that the export of certain surveillance and intrusive technologies from the EU can be used for serious human rights violations and that these technologies could also be used against the EU's strategic interests? If not, why not?
3. Does the VP/HR agree that updating the EU's dual-use regulation or taking specific measures to tackle this problem should be a matter of extreme urgency? If not, why not?
4. Does the VP/HR agree that in the meantime, using the 'catch-all' clause in the dual-use regulation could be a temporary, if unsatisfactory, solution? If not, why not?
5. What action does the VP/HR aim to take to stop the export of these technologies to Ethiopia and to protect Ethiopians at home and abroad?
6. On what timeline does the VP/HR envision coming up with a new proposal to update the dual-use regulation?

¹ http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/ethiopia0314_ForUpload_0.pdf