

**Question for written answer E-012752/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

Glenis Willmott (S&D), Richard Howitt (S&D) and David Martin (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - Harassment of researchers and human rights defenders by the Thai authorities, with special reference to the case of Andy Hall

In 2012, EU citizen Andy Hall conducted research for a Finnwatch report which highlighted the abuse of migrant workers in Thailand by Thai company Natural Fruit. The report's release in 2013 led to several criminal and civil cases being filed against Andy Hall by Natural Fruit, relating to defamation and computer crime.

Aspects of the report's findings have been confirmed by the Thai Ministry of Labour and a Natural Fruit employee. Yet the cases have been allowed to continue through the Thai judicial system.

The Commission previously stated, in response to Parliamentary Question P-003809/2013, that the EU was aware of Andy Hall's case and 'has followed this matter closely and will continue to do so together with Member States'.

With reference to the above points:

1. what is the EU currently doing to support Andy Hall with regard to the various cases brought against him for campaigning for human rights?
2. what does the VP/HR plan to do ahead of Andy Hall's next trial on 19 October 2015 to ensure that the trial is held in accordance with international human rights conventions?
3. what does the VP/HR plan to do to prevent other European researchers and human rights campaigners from being harassed by the Thai authorities, in light of the EU Guidelines on human rights defenders?