Question for written answer E-001197/2018

to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)

Rule 130

Syed Kamall (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - EU and Western Sahara

I have been contacted by a constituent who campaigns on behalf of the people of the Western Sahara.

My constituent tells me that the Commission is currently negotiating a modified protocol to the Association Agreement with Morocco, in order to continue trade with the territory of Western Sahara within that framework. The Court of Justice of the European Union considers Western Sahara not to be part of Morocco. Reports by the UN and NGOs give a negative view of the human rights situation in the territory controlled by Morocco, particularly concerning self-determination.

1. Given that the UN mission in Western Sahara has no mandate to monitor human rights, does the EU monitor human rights in Western Sahara, or does it rely on monitoring from Moroccan institutions or other more neutral institutions?

2. Given that the Advocate General of the European Court of Justice recently stated that the EU has violated the people of Western Sahara’s right to self-determination, since the bulk of EU-flagged fishing under the EU-Morocco Fisheries Agreement occurs in Western Saharan waters, how are the talks with Morocco to cover trade from Western Sahara compatible with Western Sahara’s right to self-determination?