**Question for written answer E-003689/2018**

**to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

**Jonathan Arnott (EFDD)**

Subject: VP/HR - Following-up on restrictions to freedom of religion in Algeria

This question arises from my Written Question P-002467-18 on freedom of religion in Algeria and the restrictions facing certain religious groups (for instance the Association of the Protestant Churches of Algeria - *L’Église Protestante d’Algérie* (EPA)) and the Commissioner’s response of 18 June 2018.

I am grateful to Vice-President Mogherini for her response concerning freedom of religion and inter-religious dialogue, which is indeed necessary, but can she confirm whether the specific issues concerning the closure/non-registration of churches in Algeria are being raised?

Since October 2017, government officials in Algeria have closed or ordered the activities of at least ten churches to cease and have launched a systematic campaign aimed at pressuring the church. I am pleased to report that recently two churches have been allowed to re-open and resume their activities.

However, a number of churches remain closed and the Algerian Government is still failing to recognise religious organisations such as the EPA, despite meeting all legal requirements.

In light of this, will the VP/HR raise this specific issue and apply pressure on the Algerian Government to end this restrictive campaign and so that organisations such as the EPA can be legally recognised?