

Question for written answer E-001875/2019/rev.1
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Paloma López Bermejo (GUE/NGL)

Subject: VP/HT - Persecution and imprisonment of Sahrawi activist Ali Saadouni

Political persecution and makeshift trials by the Moroccan Government are the everyday lot of Sahrawi citizens. To this should be added what they undergo once arrested and transferred to Moroccan prisons. For the Moroccan police to torture and beat Sahrawis is nothing out of the ordinary. One of the most recent cases concerns the activist Ali Saadouni, who was arrested on 10 April 2019 for placing Sahrawi flags in the occupied territory of Laayoune. He has been charged with possession of drugs and contempt of court with violence. However, despite being tortured, Saadouni has denied the charges. His trial has been postponed but he has not been allowed prison visits of any kind.

1) The Moroccan police's practices are completely contrary to Article 1 of the Declaration on the Protection of All Persons from being Subjected to Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (9 December 1975). Is the Vice-President / High Representative going to allow such acts by Morocco to be overlooked?

2) What steps will the Vice-President / High Representative take to ensure there is a fair trial?