

**Question for written answer P-000351/2018
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Wajid Khan (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - The arrest and prosecution of Reuters journalists in Myanmar

Myanmar-based Reuters reporters Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo face up to 14 years in prison under the Official State Secrets Act, introduced under British colonial rule. Wa Lone's health has reportedly suffered in detention and he requires medical attention.

They were covering the situation in Rakhine state where more than 665 000 Muslims have fled a deadly military crackdown. Human rights and journalists' organisations have called for their immediate release and for freedom of speech to be respected.

According to Amnesty International: 'This is an attempt to silence investigations into military crimes against Rohingya in Rakhine State, and to scare other journalists away from doing the same'. Myanmar has seen increasing curbs on press freedom, especially on issues around the military and the conflict in Rakhine state.

With such a large-scale crisis unfolding, the role of international and local media is essential in communicating events to the world.

- What is the VP/HR doing to ensure the immediate release of the journalists and guarantee their well-being in the meantime?
- What have the EEAS and VP/HR done to promote freedom of speech in Myanmar and to bring the country's legislation on freedom of expression into line with international human rights law and standards?