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| **31 July 2013** |

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| http://www.europarl.europa.eu/img/struct/navigation/spacer.gif | [**E-006630/13**](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2013-006630&language=PL) | http://www.europarl.europa.eu/img/struct/navigation/spacer.gif | [**E-006631/13**](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2013-006631&language=PL) |

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| **Joint answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the CommissionWritten questions: E-006630/13, E-006631/13** |
| The HR/VP is aware of the circumstances under which a group of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) was turned back by Moroccan authorities en route to the territory of Western Sahara (WS). The EU raised the issue with the Moroccan authorities. The WS issue often causes intransigent positions of the parties involved. The EU believes that we should act to enable a more constructive approach according to which dialogue is possible also on sensitive issues and visits to WS undertaken in good faith by international observers are allowed. The recent mission to WS by MEPs of the socialist group shows that this is possible.The EU has repeatedly (i) expressed concern about the long duration of the WS conflict and the implications for the security and cooperation in the region; (ii) addressed critical issues in the meetings of the joint bodies established under the EU/Morocco Association Agreement and called on all parties to restrain from violence and to respect human rights; (iii) expressed support to the UN and supports the Security Council Resolution 2099 (2013) which is ‘stressing the importance of improving the human rights situation in Western Sahara and the Tindouf camps’ and ‘welcoming the strengthening of the National Council on Human Rights Commissions operating in Dakhla and Laayoune’.The EU closely follows the findings of Member States missions to WS and is considering to contribute to such initiatives in a coordinated way and at the appropriate level. |

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| **Parliamentary questions** |
| **10 June 2013** |

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| E-006630-13 |

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| **Question for written answerto the Commission Rule 117Isabella Lövin (Verts/ALE) , Raül Romeva i Rueda (Verts/ALE) , Norbert Neuser (S&D) , Marco Scurria (PPE) , Ivo Vajgl (ALDE) , Willy Meyer (GUE/NGL) , Åsa Westlund (S&D) , Vicente Miguel Garcés Ramón (S&D) , Francisco Sosa Wagner (NI) , Jill Evans (Verts/ALE)** |

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| **http://www.europarl.europa.eu/img/struct/functional/arrow_title_doc.gif Subject:  EU monitoring of human rights in Western Sahara** |

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| http://www.europarl.europa.eu/img/struct/functional/answer.gif | [Answer(s)](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getAllAnswers.do?reference=E-2013-006630&language=PL) |

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| On 6 March 2013, Isabella LÖVIN, Ivo VAJGL, Willy MEYER and Vicente GARCÉS RAMÓN — members of the Intergroup for Western Sahara, which has the support of more than 60 MEPs — were on their way to El Aaiún in Western Sahara on a human rights fact-finding mission, but were denied entry into Morocco at Casablanca airport.In view of this incident, as well as the facts that a) in 2010 the PECH Committee did not get permission from Morocco to organise an official delegation to Morocco including Western Sahara; b) other MEPs, as well as national politicians, have previously been refused entry; c) the Commission is now negotiating both a fisheries agreement and a free-trade agreement with Morocco; and d) a 2013 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on torture found an increase in torture and ill-treatment during detention and arrest processes in Morocco, something which was confirmed in a recent report by the Robert F. Kennedy Foundation; we would like the Commission to answer each of the following questions:How many official EU delegations have in recent years visited the non-self-governing territory of Western Sahara, and how have these delegations investigated the human rights situation?Does the Commission intend to undertake an official fact-finding mission of its own in Western Sahara, with a programme to meet with all the relevant stakeholders, and if not, why not?How does the EU ensure that the protection of human rights and compliance with the rule of law laid down in the EU-Morocco Association Agreement are properly enforced?How has the Commission formally reacted to the expulsion of four MEPs from Morocco on 6 March 2013? |