

**Question for written answer E-016082/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

Javier Nart (ALDE) and María Teresa Giménez Barbat (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Ashraf Fayadh, sentenced to death for apostasy

Ashraf Fayadh, a Saudi Arabian poet and artist born in Palestine, was sentenced to death by the General Court in Abha (Saudi Arabia) on 17 November 2015. The court found him guilty of apostasy for allegedly using his poetry to cast doubts on religion and spread atheism.

According to Amnesty International, he was denied access to a lawyer throughout his detention and trial.

Saudi Arabia has ratified the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment but nevertheless it executed over 150 people in 2015 alone, in half these cases for offences that are not recognised as such in international law, such as apostasy, adultery or witchcraft.

Does the VP/HR plan to urge the Saudi authorities to release both Mr Fayad and all the other prisoners of conscience on death row in Saudi Arabia immediately, and annul their sentences?