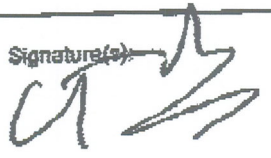
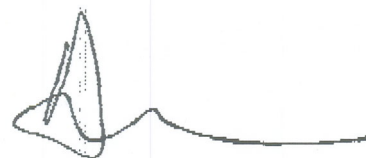


EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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## FORM FOR TABLING A PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

ORAL QUESTIONS	WRITTEN QUESTIONS
To be put to: COUNCIL <input type="checkbox"/> COMMISSION <input type="checkbox"/>	To be put to: PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL <input type="checkbox"/> COUNCIL <input type="checkbox"/> COMMISSION <input type="checkbox"/> VICE-PRESIDENT / HIGH REPRESENTATIVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Question for oral answer with debate (Rule 115) <input type="checkbox"/> Question Time (Rule 116) <input type="checkbox"/>	Question for written answer (Rule 117) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Priority question (Rule 117(4)) <input type="checkbox"/>
AUTHOR(S): Charles Tannock, Ana Gomes, <del>Bartho</del>	
SUBJECT: The imprisonment of Bassel Safadi Khartabil <small>(please specify)</small>	
<p>TEXT:</p> <p>In March 2012, the Assad regime in Syria arrested Bassel Safadi Khartabil, a 31-year-old Syrian of Palestinian origin. Mr Khartabil is a distinguished computer engineer who, through his innovations with social media, digital education and open-source web software, is credited with opening up the Internet in Syria - a country with a notorious record of online censorship - and vastly extending online access and knowledge to the Syrian people. He has contributed to numerous Internet projects, and was ranked by the American 'Foreign Policy' magazine as the 19th most influential thinker in 2012 (one place above Mario Draghi). His volunteer work, which was always anti-violent in its nature, was greatly valued by Syrians of all backgrounds, and it is strongly suspected that his arrest was designed to stifle free expression in Syria, and restrict Syrian citizens' abilities to engage with online communities and discourses.</p> <p>It is alleged that Mr Khartabil has faced torture at the hands of the Syrian authorities, and throughout his incarceration he has been denied all forms of legal representation. Although he has been moved from a military to a civilian jail, and despite his total absence of military activity, he still faces a military court, and a life sentence. Despite all of this, he has still not been formally charged with any crime.</p> <p>1. Is the VP/HR aware of the ongoing imprisonment of Bassel Safadi Khartabil? If so, has she issued any public statement on the matter?</p> <p>2. Does she agree that this represents a further abuse by the Assad regime in its attempts to block the free spread of information?</p> <p>2. Will the VP/HR use the leverage available to her to press for his release, insisting upon his status as a non-combatant whose only crime has been to oppose censorship and promote the freedom of information?</p>	
Signature(s):  	
Date: 10/12/13	