

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3276/09

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Subject: Punishments for homosexuality in Egypt, Bahrain and Morocco

We have received disturbing news about recent arrests of people (including an EU citizen) on charges of homosexuality in Egypt, Morocco and Bahrain.

Four men were arrested in Cairo on 5 January by Egyptian Security Services. In the Kingdom of Morocco an EU citizen Gian Paolo, from Italy, was sentenced to prison and fined by the Criminal Chamber of the Lower Court in Marrakesh. In Bahrain two men were sentenced to six months in jail with hard labour for homosexuality.

In the light of the recent UN Declaration on the decriminalisation of homosexuality and the statement by Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner at the plenary sitting of Parliament on 17 December 2008 that the Commission was ready to engage in the decriminalisation of homosexuality throughout the world, we would ask the Commission to intervene in the above-mentioned cases.

Please also inform us about the action the Commission is taking and will be taking to encourage the decriminalisation of homosexuality throughout the world.

Where EU Association Agreements are in place, will the Commission invoke the clause on human rights?