

Brussels, 21 NOV. 2016
A(2016)5891313-6457055

Mr Pavel Telička MEP
European Parliament
Rue Wiertz 60
1047 Brussels

Dear Mr. Telička,

I would hereby like to thank you for your letter dated on 7 October 2016. I have been following closely the human rights situation in Sudan, which showed no signs of overall improvement in the recent past and even deteriorated in some areas. Serious human rights violations have indeed been perpetrated by state actors, government-supported militia, and rebel forces in impunity. These happen with serious disregard for Sudan's Interim Constitution of 2005 and its international commitments. International and local civil society organisations in Sudan face severe obstructions in their work, in particular those working on human rights issues and in conflict-affected areas.

Harassment and persecution of Christians continues in Sudan, with at least eight Christian pastors and church representatives being arrested and held for interrogation by the security forces. Three of them are currently being tried for espionage and crimes against the state.

I am well aware of the case of Mr Petr Jasek and please rest assured that we are closely following developments of his court proceedings. Our EU Delegation in Khartoum, in cooperation with EU Member State Embassies on the ground, ensures European presence at the trials at all times. At the end of September international observers were given permission to meet with Petr Jasek in the office of the judge. This meeting allowed for our colleagues to get a better understanding of the pastors' detention conditions.

Let me assure you that promoting a conducive environment for civil society and the protection of human rights defenders are key issues in the EU relations with Sudan, as demonstrated in the EU Country Roadmap for Engagement with the Civil Society (2014-2017) and the EU Human Rights and Democracy Strategy (2016-2020) for Sudan. The EU will continue calling on the government to respect freedom of expression, freedom of religion, peaceful assembly, to give detainees the opportunity for fair trial, and to conduct credible investigations into human rights violations. We will surely continue raising the case of Mr Jasek when communicating with our Sudanese counterparts.

Yours sincerely,



Federica Mogherini