

*Thursday, 24 October 2013 - Strasbourg*

*Debate*

Pino Arlacchi (S&D ), in writing . – The principal aim of the European Neighbourhood Policy is to strengthen the partnership between the EU and the countries and societies of the neighbourhood, in order to build and consolidate healthy democracies, respect for human rights and the rule of law. For this reason I believe that this is the right context to discuss about the on-going violation of human rights in Western Sahara.

As neighbours, and partner countries, we must urge Morocco to continue negotiations for a peaceful and long-lasting solution of the Western Sahara conflict. The Sahrawi people have the right to self-determination through a democratic referendum, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions. Also, I believe that Morocco should urgently release all the Sahrawi political prisoners. We cannot ignore that the rights of Sahrawi's are those of us all. And we cannot ignore that one of our neighbour countries is perpetrating the last case of colonial oppression in Africa.

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