



European Parliament

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Parlement Européen
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Dear Mr Reynders (European Commissioner for Justice),
Dear Ms Johansson (Commissioner for Home Affairs),
Dear Mr Várhelyi, (Commissioner for Enlargement and the Neighbourhood Policy),
Dear Mr Schinas (Commissioner for Promoting our European Way of Life),

On January 23, 2021, human rights defender Helena Maleno was deported and expelled from Morocco when she was returning from a short work trip to Spain. Morocco has been the country of residence for Helena and her family for the past 20 years. After being subjected to a violent and sudden deportation, Helena was forced to remain separated from her minor daughter for several weeks, fearing for her safety while she remained in the country that had expelled her. Despite the fact that both the courts of Spain and Morocco have recognized that Helena's work is not a crime, the criminalization orchestrated for years by the Spanish Ministry of the Interior - and specifically, the Central Unit of Illegal Immigration Networks and Documentary Falsehoods (UCRIF) of the National Police of Spain - has managed to force Helena and her family to leave their home.

Helena Maleno is a human rights defender and founder of the Caminando Fronteras Collective. She is an expert in migration and human trafficking, focused on women's rights and children. His advocacy work has saved the lives of more than 100,000 migrants on our borders, as recorded by Caminando Fronteras. It is recognized by the UN and the main international human rights organizations, highlighting the support of the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of rights defenders Humans. She has been distinguished with more than twenty national and

international human rights awards, and has recently been named Doctor Honoris Causa by the University of the Balearic Islands.

However, after years of criminalization, having won legal proceedings in both Spain and Morocco, derived from police assemblies, which ended with the recognition of her defense of the rights of migrants, the violence against her and her family has not ceased.

During the judicial process in Morocco, he saw his right and that of his children to live in the violated country: their residency was taken away and their requests to be reinstated have been systematically rejected. Finally, the Moroccan police violently expelled her from the country in retaliation for her work in defense of human rights.

We recall the 2018 EP resolution urging MS to stop considering humanitarian aid to migrants as a crime; the pronouncement of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe on the obstruction of the work of NGOs in the Mediterranean and the innumerable complaints from civil society about the necessary modification of the Facilitation Directive, to prevent the work of NGOs and people who give humanitarian assistance to migrants and refugees from being criminalized.

Therefore, we ask the EC to:

- Enforce the pronouncements of Parliament, the Council and the civil society, on the cease of criminalization of humanitarian assistance
- Hold a meeting with Ms Maleno, as it is stated in the EU guidelines on HRD protection ,and publicly acknowledge her work as a human HRD and the positive impact of her work for democracy and the rule of law.
- Push the Spanish and Moroccan governments to clarify responsibilities in the pertinent institutions, to ensure that persecutory actions against Ms. Maleno are not repeated and to guarantee reparation for the innumerable damages instigated against the defender and her family.

Miguel Urbán Crespo, MEP, THE LEFT

Marisa Matias, MEP, THE LEFT

Malin Björk, MEP, THE LEFT

Leila Chaibi, MEP, THE LEFT

Nikolaj Villumsen, MEP, THE LEFT
Oezlem Demirel, MEP, THE LEFT
Cornelia Ernst, MEP, THE LEFT
Clare Daly, MEP, THE LEFT
Jordi Solé, MEP, GREENS/EFA
Diana Riba i Giner, MEP, GREENS/EFA
Ana Miranda, Representante de BNG en el Parlamento Europeo
Michèle Rivasi, MEP, GREENS/EFA
Margrete Auken, MEP, GREENS/EFA
Tineke Strik, MEP, GREENS/EFA
Dietmar Köster, MEP, GREENS/EFA, S&D
Izaskun Bilbao Barandica, MEP, RENEW
Clara Ponsatí, MEP Non-attached
Carles Puigdemont, MEP Non-attached
Antonio Comín, MEP Non-attached