

**Question for written answer E-002258/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Erik Marquardt (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Politically motivated trial against Doros Polykarpou in Cyprus

On 15 October 2024, Doros Polykarpou, a human rights defender and founder of the Cypriot NGO KISA, was set to go on trial for the misdemeanours of illegal entry and insulting and assaulting two security guards in relation to a 2022 visit to the Pournara First Reception Center.¹ His complaint of assault by security guards was dismissed, and he now faces a three-year prison sentence. KISA and Polykarpou have long been targets of violent attacks, legal action and threats, including death threats, for their criticism of Cyprus' policies and practices regarding the rights of migrants and refugees, and earlier this year KISA's office was the target of a bomb attack. There are concerns that the trial is unfair and politically motivated, exacerbated by its recent postponement to February 2025 after the prosecutor failed to provide Polykarpou's defence with requested evidence.

1. The bombing of the KISA office² poses a lethal threat to the work of activists and human rights defenders. What does the Commission intend to do to protect such work from criminal acts?
2. In 2022, Mr Polykarpou was investigating deplorable conditions in the Pournara First Reception Centre. What steps does the Commission plan to take regarding the allegations that asylum seekers are being held in inhumane conditions?
3. Is the Commission aware of any other human rights defenders or activists facing repercussions for similar work in Cyprus and, if so, which cases are those?

Submitted: 24.10.2024

¹ <https://www.frontlinedefenders.org/en/case/human-rights-defender-doros-polykarpou-trial-possibility-imprisonment>.

² <https://cyprus-mail.com/2024/01/05/kisa-offices-destroyed-in-apparent-attack/>.