

Brussels, 20 DEC. 2018  
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Ms Ana Gomes MEP  
European Parliament  
Brussels

Dear Ana,

I would like to thank you for your letter regarding Senator Leila de Lima, a former Secretary of Justice of the Philippines and strong advocate of the rule of law and human rights, who has been jailed since 24 February 2017 for alleged illegal drug trafficking.

On the day of her arrest we called on the Philippines in a written statement, to respect its obligations under international law, in particular the respect of due process, the independence of the judiciary and the right to a fair trial. In the following weeks, Senator de Lima, through a letter to the EU Head of Delegation in Manila, thanked the EU for being a *"genuine partner in promotion the dignity and fundamental rights of every individual"*. She also expressed gratitude for the *"collective initiative undertaken by the EP in calling for (her) immediate release and for the dismissal of all the politically-motivated charges against (her)"*.

Since then we have closely followed her case and have reiterated our call at various occasions. Last year a trip to the Philippines of Members of the EP Sub-committee on Human Rights had the opportunity to visit Senator de Lima in prison. During the latest GSP+ monitoring mission of last September, we specifically called on the Philippines to protect the rights of human rights defenders.

Regarding your request that the EU analyse all elements of the case to free Ms de Lima, I can assure you that the EU Delegation in Manila is closely following the proceedings.

To conclude, the way the "war on drugs" is being conducted by the Filipino authorities is a matter of grave concern to us. Over the past months, we have engaged with our interlocutors to establish a bilateral dialogue on good governance, rule of law, and human rights under the EU-Philippines Partnership and Cooperation Agreement. We are convinced that such a dialogue is an extremely valuable tool which would allow us, among other things, to have thorough discussions on individual cases such as that of Ms de Lima.

Yours sincerely,



Federica Mogherini