

**Question for written answer E-000352/2015  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

**Mark Demesmaeker (ECR), Hans-Olaf Henkel (ECR), Karol Karski (ECR) and Charles Tannock (ECR)**

Subject: VP/HR - Seized financial assets of Panzi Hospital in eastern Congo

The Congolese tax authorities want the renowned Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, set up in 1999 by Dr Denis Mukwege, to pay approximately EUR 500 000 in allegedly overdue taxes. A law passed in 2012 stipulates that all government salaries and donations should be taxed.

Panzi Hospital management suspects this to be a politically motivated decision, given that no other hospital in Congo has ever been required to pay any taxes. The tax authorities seized the hospital's financial assets in December 2014. The government's action leaves the hospital unable to pay staff salaries, and it is feared that it may affect the hospital's daily operation.

Dr Mukwege was recently awarded Parliament's Sakharov Prize for his work with victims of sexual violence in eastern Congo and is well known for his forthright opinions on corruption and lawlessness in eastern Congo.

Does the VP/HR suspect this decision to be driven by a political motive, with a view to silencing Dr Mukwege?

How does she plan to cooperate with European development donors to ensure that the Congolese Government reverses its decision?

Which instruments are still available to continue supporting Panzi Hospital?