

Question for written answer E-001167/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Fernando Maura Barandiarán (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Artists' freedom in Cuba

As the United States and Cuba began talks to restore diplomatic relations, the arrest of artist Tania Bruguera on 30 December 2014 for attempting to stage the performance 'Tatlin's Whisper #6' in Revolution Square in Havana – is a reminder of the limits of expression in Cuba.

Cases of censorship in the arts followed afterwards: graffiti artist Danilo Maldonado Machado has been detained since December for trying to use two pigs whose flanks were inscribed with the names Fidel and Raúl in a performance; Boris González Arenas, a professor at the International School near Havana, was first detained after he tried to join Bruguera's performance and then fired, accused of publishing articles 'against the Cuban State'. French movie 'Return to Ithaca' by Laurent Cantet, based on a story by the activist writer Leonardo Padura, was pulled, without explanation, from the International Festival of New Latin American Cinema in Havana.

1. Is the VP/HR aware of such limitation of freedom of expression and the current state of control of cultural space and intellectuals' voices, following the declaration of the opening of renewed diplomatic relations between Cuba and the US in December?
2. How does the European External Action Service intend to act to ensure the respect of basic human rights while diplomatic negotiations continue?