

**Question for written answer E-009775/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Barbara Matera (PPE)

Subject: VP/HR - Persistent violation of human rights in Uzbekistan

Following the Andijan massacre that occurred 10 years ago, the socio-political situation in Uzbekistan has gradually worsened. Political dissidents and activists are often imprisoned without any proper justification, with many of them also being tortured. The Uzbek Government has set up forced labour camps, where dissidents are sent as punishment. To make matters worse, steps have also been taken to restrict freedom of worship and limit the rights of ethnic and religious minorities.

The Norwegian Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, together with nine other human rights organisations, has recently brought this situation to the attention of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

1. Is the High Representative aware of the measures that have been taken by the Uzbek authorities to repress freedom of expression and worship within the country?
2. Does the High Representative intend to engage in dialogue with the Uzbek Government in order to convince it of the need to protect the civil and political rights of its citizens?