

**Question for written answer E-012549/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

Beatriz Becerra Basterrechea (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Alarming statistics on discrimination and violence against women and girls in India

Gender violence, dowry killings, female infanticide, forced marriages and labour-market discrimination are just some of the factors that make India one of the world's worst countries for women, according to the latest study published by the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

Last year alone 245 000 offenses against women were recorded in the country. Furthermore, according to figures provided by UNICEF, India is missing 50 million women as a result of selective abortion and infanticide, and 45% of girls are married before they reach the age of 18. Lastly, the female literacy rate stands at 55%, as against 77% for men.

In response to these alarming figures and in the light of the EU's commitment to promote women's rights in India and of the post-2015 sustainable development goals, can the High Representative say:

1. How she intends to elicit a robust response to this situation from the Indian Government?
2. Whether she will seek to agree a joint approach to this issue with organisations such as UN Women and relevant NGOs?
3. Whether she agrees that the plight of women and girls in India should be placed high on the agenda for the next EU-India bilateral meeting and for routine discussions she holds with the Indian authorities?