

**Question for written answer E-002398/2016
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Doru-Claudian Frunzuliță (S&D)**

Subject: VP/HR - Human rights in Ethiopia

According to a Human Rights Watch dispatch, a year ago today, Ethiopian security forces arrested Pastor Omot Agwa and six colleagues, including Ashine Astin, at Addis Ababa's Bole Airport and took them to the notorious Maekelawi police station, where torture is routine.

The arrest came several months after Omot, a respected activist from Ethiopia's Gambela region, served as translator for the World Bank Inspection Panel. The panel investigated the Anuak indigenous people's allegation that the Ethiopian Government was responsible for widespread forced displacement and other serious human rights violations in relation to a World Bank project in Gambela.

Omot faces 20 years to life in prison, accused of being a co-founder and leader of the Gambela People's Liberation Movement (GPLM), a group which has now been inactive for many years and that has not been designated a terrorist organisation by the Ethiopian Parliament. Ashine is accused of preparing a presentation entitled 'Deforestation, Dispossession and Displacement of Gambela in General and Majang People in Particular'.

Is the VP/HR intending to hold talks with the Ethiopian Government to ensure a fair and transparent trial for Pastor Omot Agwa?