

**Question for written answer E-006172/2016
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Francisco Assis (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - situation for Cuban political dissident and winner of the 2010 Sakharov Prize, Guillermo Fariñas

The Cuban political dissident and winner of the 2010 Sakharov Prize, Guillermo Fariñas, has been on a thirst and hunger strike since 19 July 2016, as a ramification of which he is risking his life and was hospitalised on 28 July 2016. He had already led 24 hunger strikes as a means to make the world aware of the situation of Cuban political prisoners and to protest against authoritarianism and repression by the country's government. The recent thawing of relations between Cuba and the US and the start of what appears to be a process of opening the country up does not automatically absolve the Castro regime of the serious human rights abuses that are still happening in the country. On the contrary, although Cuba is opening up diplomatically, that action is not being matched internally, and more than 100 of its political prisoners are being tortured physically or psychologically.

In view of this grave situation, what measures does the VP/HR intend to take to make the international community aware of the situation of Guillermo Fariñas and the other 21 dissidents who are on thirst and hunger strike for the same reasons? What measures are planned to pressure the Cuban regime to uphold human rights and freedom of thought?