

**Question for written answer E-004903/2017  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**  
Rule 130  
**Barbara Matera (PPE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Systematic executions of the Shi'a minority in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is abusing its authority by carrying out systematic executions of its Shi'a minority. In Qatif, a city in the country's Eastern Province, 15 people have been executed over the past three days having been accused of destabilising security and participating in riots. It is quite clear that the death penalty is being used as a political weapon to silence any future grievances and crush protestors. According to Amnesty International, 'Yussuf Ali al-Mushaikass, a father of two, was executed along with three other men, for terror-related offences in connection with their participation in anti-government protests in the Shi'a majority Eastern Province between 2011 and 2012'<sup>1</sup>. In addition, al-Mushaikass's family was not informed about the execution, and only found out through an announcement made on national TV. In 2017, over fifty people were executed in Saudi Arabia.

1. Can the VP/HR discuss the possibility of introducing an official moratorium on executions?
2. Can the international community demand a clearer definition of the accusations mentioned?

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<sup>1</sup> Amnesty International, 12 July 2017, 'Saudi Arabia: Death penalty used as political weapon against Shi'a as executions spike across country' (<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2017/07/saudi-arabia-death-penalty-used-as-political-weapon-against-shia-as-executions-spike-across-country/>).