

**Question for written answer E-005933/2018
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

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Subject: VP/HR - Situation of the human rights activists in Saudi Arabia

According to Amnesty International, which has collected the testimonies of at least three human rights defenders, Saudi Arabia has tortured male and female activists for women's rights, arrested without trial. The torture has been verified in the Saudi prison of Dhahban, where men and women were repeatedly hit with electric shocks and lashes.

One of the female activists, while being interrogated, was molested by an agent covered with a mask, while another attempted suicide, according to the report by the non-governmental organisation.

Among the women stopped in recent months is the young 29-year-old activist Loujain al-Hathloul, arrested for her commitment to support the revocation of the driving ban, and the elderly Aziza Al-Yousef, who has fought for years for the rights of Saudi women.

Considering the already very backward situation for women's rights in the country and the very serious accusations mentioned above raised by the human rights organisations, can VP/HR say:

- 1) Is she is aware of the worrying situation these activists are in?
- 2) What actions have been or will be deployed by the EU in order to defend the dignity and integrity of tortured women and activists?