

**Question for written answer E-001297/2019
to the Commission (Vicepresidente / Alto rappresentante)**
Rule 130
Pina Picierno (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - Arrest of women's rights activist Nasrin Sotoudeh

According to Amnesty International, Nasrin Sotoudeh, the well-known lawyer at the forefront of the fight to defend civil and women's rights in Iran, has been sentenced to 33 years in prison and 148 lashes by an Iranian court, following an irregular trial. Nasrin Sotoudeh has been charged with 'inciting corruption and prostitution', 'openly committing a sinful act by... appearing in public without a hijab' and 'disrupting public order'.

The judges apparently applied Article 134 of Iran's Penal Code, which allows them to impose a higher sentence than the maximum statutory requirement when a defendant faces more than three charges. Nasrin Sotoudeh has been under house arrest since 13 June 2018.

This excessively harsh sentence, against an activist for human rights and women's rights, demonstrates even more clearly how cruel the Iranian regime is towards women.

In the light of this shameful news and of the fact that the European Parliament awarded Nasrin Sotoudeh the Sakharov Prize in 2012 for her activities to promote the freedom of Iranian women, can the VP/HR say what diplomatic measures she will take to ensure that Nasrin Sotoudeh is freed again as soon as possible?