

**Question for written answer P-008743/2016  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)  
Rule 130  
Antonio Tajani (PPE) and Luis de Grandes Pascual (PPE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Situation in Venezuela

The situation in Venezuela has grown drastically worse in recent months. The problem is not just a political crisis now; the country is suffering from an unprecedented economic and humanitarian crisis.

Inflation is out of control, with a figure of 1 600 % forecast for 2017 as opposed to 400 % at present, and an unemployment rate of 18 % which is also forecast to rise to 21 % in 2017. To see, in a country with the largest oil reserves in the world, people begging for food on the streets and highways or being robbed is unthinkable.

What is more, in declaring all the laws passed by the National Assembly – which represents the people – unconstitutional, declaring a state of emergency and bringing the forces of law and order under the control of the military, the executive is refusing to recognise the legislative power.

This crisis is also having repercussions at regional level. Moreover, Venezuela will be suspended from Mercosur as from 1 December and not have any speaking rights there until it complies with the commitments it must fulfil as an associated State.

1. Would the High Representative not agree that the time has come to take action to help the Venezuelan people, whose suffering daily grows worse?
2. When will the High Representative call for the release of political prisoners?
3. Has she scheduled a meeting with the wives of the political prisoners?