

**Question for written answer E-008696/2012
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 117
Thijs Berman (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - Convictions for witchcraft in Saudi Arabia

Over the past months there have been recurrent news reports on the imprisonment and execution of people in Saudi Arabia. For example, a Sri Lankan woman was arrested on suspicion of casting a spell on a 13-year old girl in April, and a Saudi man was beheaded on charges of sorcery and witchcraft in June.

According to Amnesty International, Saudi Arabia applies the death penalty to a wide range of offences, from murder to sorcery and even homosexuality. Surprisingly, the charges of witchcraft and sorcery are not defined as crimes.

1. Is the Vice-President / High Representative aware of these convictions in Saudi Arabia?
2. Does the Vice-President / High Representative have a regular human rights dialogue with the Government of Saudi Arabia?
3. Has the issue of the death penalty, in particular in relation to the convictions for sorcery and witchcraft, recently been discussed within this dialogue?
4. If so, what message did the Vice-President / High Representative convey and what has been the result?
5. If not, could the Vice-President / High Representative explain why this has not been done?