

**Question for written answer E-000169/2013
to the Commission
Rule 117
Marietta Giannakou (PPE)**

Subject: Infringement of human rights in Bahrain

On Monday 7 January 2013, the Bahrain Supreme Court upheld the sentences imposed on 13 opposition activists involved in anti-government protests in 2011, seven of them being sentenced to life terms for plotting to overthrow the government.

The sentences have been condemned by human rights organisations and opposition members in Bahrain, who maintain that the decision of the court was politically motivated, arguing that there is no proof that the activists committed or incited others to commit acts of violence during the protests. Many of those arrested were tortured into signing confessions which means that the arrest and sentencing of the activists is inadmissible under international law.

This decision is expected to provoke an outcry within Shiite Muslim communities and villages, adding fuel to the recent groundswell of resentment at the uncompromising rule of the Sunni monarch, Hamad, and thereby causing to be lost yet another opportunity to inject new life into the flagging reconciliation talks.

In view of this and given the cooperation agreement signed between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council (of which Bahrain is a member):

1. What view does the Commission take of this recent human rights infringement in Bahrain, a country in which the rights of a substantial part of the population are being systematically flouted?
2. Will it make known its views on whether or not justice has been properly served in this case? What instruments will it use in order to avert acts of violence and/or destabilisation with repercussions not only in this country but also beyond?