

Question for written answer E-007776/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Paweł Robert Kowal (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - human rights in Belarus

One of the key aspects of the EU's policy on Belarus is the progress that needs to be made in terms of human rights in the country, in particular the right to freedom of speech. There are currently 11 prisoners of conscience being held in Belarusian prisons, and international organisations repeatedly record violations of human rights in the country. This issue holds particular significance for those EU Member States which maintain relations with Belarus and in the context of the forthcoming Eastern Partnership Summit in Vilnius.

1. What action is currently being taken by the EU institutions with a view to securing the release of the political prisoners being held in Belarus, and what has been the outcome of this action?
2. Which alternative courses of action are being considered by EU diplomats in relation to Belarus, particularly if the political prisoners in Belarus are not released?