

**Question for written answer E-013166/2013/rev.1
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Edite Estrela (S&D)**

Subject: VP/HR - Human rights violations in Russian prisons

Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, a member of the Russian band Pussy Riot, has been moved to a prison in Siberia as further punishment for having spoken out about the degrading conditions in Russian prisons. The activist started a hunger strike last week in protest at the conditions prisoners are kept in and the ill-treatment meted out to them, practices which violate the international human rights commitments undertaken by Russia. In a letter sent to the press, the Russian activist describes the inhumane conditions prisoners are held in, describing in detail how inmates' rights are not respected and their basic needs, such as rest, food and hygiene, are not met.

Given that the European Union sees human rights as universal and indivisible, and it is committed to actively promoting and defending them, both within the EU and in its relations with third countries, what is the Vice-President/High Representative currently doing to ensure that human rights are respected in Russian prisons and to help improve prison conditions in Russia?