

**Question for written answer E-003309/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 117
Marina Yannakoudakis (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - Lion welfare in South Africa

I have been contacted by a concerned London constituent who has made me aware of 'canned lion hunts'. This is an abhorrent practice that allegedly occurs in South Africa where cubs are first removed from their captive mothers to be hand reared, after which they are given to tourist petting zoos, where they are very often drugged to ensure they are docile. Once they become too large for the petting zoos, they are used for 'walk with lions' experiences, and when they grow out of this phase they are kept in cramped cages waiting to be 'hunted' for human profit. It is estimated that there are 8 000 lions in these programmes; double the number that can be found naturally in the wild.

For moral and conservation reasons, would the European External Action Service (EEAS) agree that these magnificent animals must be protected and we must do our utmost to encourage the South African Government to use whatever means it has at its disposal to bring an end to this cruel practice?

Does the EEAS intend to raise this issue with the South African Government directly in the near future?