

**Question for written answer E-004554/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 117

Sergio Paolo Francesco Silvestris (PPE) and Oreste Rossi (PPE)

Subject: VP/HR - Request for secession of the district of Shumayachi from the Russian Federation

I have already in previous parliamentary questions raised the delicate issue of a potential domino effect being triggered by Crimea's independence referendum and its annexation to the Russian Federation, and we are indeed seeing pro-Russian protest movements in other regions of Ukraine. Recently, however, the Belarusian population of the Russian region of Smolensk have called on the government in Moscow to cede the district of Shumayachi to Belarus, because most of its population is Belarusian and it has historically been linked to 'White Russia'. Activists are apparently organising an online petition, claiming that the 1939 transfer of the district from Belarus to the USSR was illegal.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative answer the following questions concerning this petition:

1. Is she aware of the facts?
2. Is she aware of any comments on the petition by the Russian and Belarusian governments?
3. Has she had an opportunity to contact the Belarusian and Russian authorities to discuss the matter?
4. Has she had an opportunity to discuss the petition with the foreign ministers of the EU Member States?