

Question for written answer E-005884/2018
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Francisco Assis (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - Torture of human rights activists detained in Saudi Arabia

According to reports by Amnesty International, a number of human and civil rights activists recently detained in Saudi Arabia are being subjected to torture, including electrocution, flogging and sexual abuse. These activists include a group of women who were fighting for their right to drive and were arrested in May 2018, shortly before the Saudi authorities lifted the driving ban. Some of the detainees have still not been formally charged and have had no access to legal assistance. The UN High Commission for Human Rights has already voiced its concern regarding the case. Such barbaric practices are commonplace in Saudi Arabia, in clear violation of its obligations under international law, including the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

How does the EU intend to call for the release of these activists, and what impact will these flagrant human rights violations have on EU relations with Saudi Arabia?