

Question for written answer E-006158/2020/rev.1

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 138

Isabella Tovaglieri (ID), Simona Baldassarre (ID)

Subject: The arrest and detainment of Loujain al-Hathloul in Saudi Arabia

The Saudi activist Loujain al-Hathloul has long been at the forefront of the struggle for women's rights in her country, which remain severely curtailed: in the words of Human Rights Watch, 'women suffer systematic discrimination' in Saudi Arabia. Arrested in 2018 for her women's rights activism, Ms al-Hathloul has been detained ever since, according to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on arbitrary grounds.

According to CEDAW, and a letter sent to the Washington Post by Ms al-Hathloul's sister, the Saudi activist's health is at risk, partly because of the hunger strike she has been maintaining.

Other sources report that during her detention, which remains ongoing and yet to be confirmed by a regular trial, she has suffered regular torture and her freedom to speak to her family has been severely limited.

Given both the statement by CEDAW and the most recent information, can the VP/HR:

1. Monitor the state of Loujain al-Hathloul's health?
2. Ascertain what has been done so far and whether measures have been taken or are planned to advocate for her release?
3. Support CEDAW's call for her immediate release.

Supporters¹

¹ This question is supported by Members other than the authors: Annika Bruna (ID), Christine Anderson (ID)