

**Question for written answer E-002344/2022**

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

Rule 138

**Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)**

**Subject:** Arrest of two young Ukrainian communists

Mikhail Kononovich, leader of the youth wing of the outlawed Leninist Communist Party of Ukraine (CPU), and his brother, Aleksander Kononovich, have been held by the Ukrainian authorities for over 100 days. The EU is apparently willing to go along with this, as evidenced by the Commission reply of 29 April 2022, to the effect that 'it is aware' of the situation and is in direct contact with the Ukrainian authorities, from which it is receiving 'regular updates'.

The Ukrainian authorities have appointed a lawyer for the two brothers, who must now decide whether to plead guilty as charged and serve a ten-year sentence or plead innocent and face life imprisonment.

In the light of this and bearing in mind the EU's upgraded relations with Ukraine as a candidate for membership,

1. What view does the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy take of the urgent request for the immediate release of the young communists and of EU's responsibility to protect them from major risks to their lives and health and ensure that they are not subjected to further inhuman treatment and coercion?
2. Given that the Commission is aware of the persecution to which they are being subjected and their unacceptable detention, having been 'following the case closely', why has it done nothing to date to secure their immediate release?