Question for oral answer O-000271/2011
to the Commission
Rule 115
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on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

Subject: Situation of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike in Israel

Article 119 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, to which Israel is a signatory, establishes that it is unlawful for a prisoner to be held in solitary confinement for over thirty consecutive days, regardless of the offence committed and even if he is answerable for several alleged incidents when his case is dealt with, whether they are connected or not. Article 116 also establishes that every prisoner has the right to receive visitors, especially near relatives.

Since 28 September, over 5000 Palestinians detained in Israel (including women, children and political representatives, and in particular members of parliament such as Marwan Barghouti and Ahmed Saadat) have gone on hunger strike in protest against solitary confinement and the worsening of the conditions in which they are being detained. The prison authorities have imposed severe penalties and unprecedented measures, provoking prisoners to express their rejection and protest by rebelling against all the rules in force in the prisons operated by the Occupying power.

Given that Article 2 of the European Union-Israel Association Agreement states that relations between the European Union and Israel shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles, which guides their domestic and international policies and constitutes an essential element of that Agreement, does the Commission not intend to ascertain whether the conditions in which Palestinian prisoners are being detained are compatible with respect for human rights?

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