

Priority question for written answer P-005862/2020
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Rule 138
Rosanna Conte (ID)

Subject: Call for the immediate release of Nasrin Sotoudeh, Iranian human and women's rights activist

Nasrin Sotoudeh is a 57-year old Iranian woman – a lawyer – who has devoted her life to defending the human rights of activists, opponents and Iranian women who have been arrested for removing their veil in public.

The authorities in Tehran have twice sentenced her and jailed her for her battles, following summary unfair trials leading to a sentence of 38 years in prison and 148 lashes. Her husband, Reza Khandan, has also been sentenced to a long term of imprisonment.

In September, Nasrin started a hunger strike to protest against the inhumane conditions, exacerbated by the current pandemic, in which prisoners live in Iran.

Her health has recently worsened and, instead of being transferred to hospital, she was taken to a prison with even worse sanitary conditions.

The EU's external action is tied to respect for human rights; can the Vice-President/High Representative therefore clarify:

1. how the talks with Iran to secure Nasrin's release are going;
2. whether he will take concrete measures – not just diplomatic ones – to safeguard the health of the woman who was awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in 2012?