

**FORM FOR TABLING A QUESTION FOR
WRITTEN ANSWER (Rule 130)**

Select only one addressee:

PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL

COUNCIL

VICE-PRESIDENT / HIGH REPRESENTATIVE

COMMISSION

Priority question

AUTHOR(S): Julie Ward

SUBJECT: Ukrainian prisoners in Russia in urgent need of support
(please specify)

TEXT:

Since the start of Russian engagement in the conflict in Ukraine, Russian security forces have unlawfully abducted and imprisoned Ukrainian citizens, and used them as show-trial cases, or as bargaining chips. NGOs have confirmed at least 30 cases of individuals effectively held as hostages by the Russian government, although numbers may be higher.

These prisoners were falsely charged with war crimes or terrorism, subject to fabricated trials, deprived of contact with the outside world, and handed long sentences of up to life imprisonment. They have been subjected to torture, inhumane treatment, and solitary confinement during their detention, or in order to extract confessions in interrogation. Several have gone on hunger strike in order to protest their situation.

Nadiya Savchenko's case has attracted international media attention. Five other hostages cases require urgent intervention because of medical emergency or upcoming legal proceedings:

- Oleksandr Kostenko,
- Gennadiy Afanasyev,
- Mykola Karpyuk and Stanislav Klykh,
- Yuriy Soloshenko

What steps has the EEAS and the VP/HR taken to alleviate the suffering of these detainees, and secure their release?

What urgent intervention will the EEAS make to immediately improve their condition?

What action will the EEAS take to uncover and prevent such abductions of Ukrainians or EU citizens?

Signature(s):

Date: 12.05.2016