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Unanswered questions by the Committee of Ministers on Ms Savchenko and political prisoners in Azerbaijan

Written question No. 707 to the Committee of Ministers
by Mr Pieter OMTZIGT, Netherlands, Group of the European People's Party

In the past few years I have tabled several written questions, namely question 665 (October 2014) and question 678 (January 2015) on the case of Ms. Savchenko, as well as questions on political prisoners in Azerbaijan, namely question 666 (October 2014). The questions are more than a year overdue. Ms. Savchenko is still a prisoner in the Russian Federation. And Azerbaijan still holds many human rights defenders in prison, even after the release of political and other prisoners this spring.

Under article 20d of the Statute of the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers provides an answer by 2/3 of the members, that is 32 votes. Yet, it seems that the Committee is unwilling to provide any answer and has found a way in which a single country can effectively veto any answer, as first a vote is taken by unanimity whether to use the 2/3 procedure. This would violate the Statute of the Council of Europe.

Mr. Omtzigt,

To ask the Committee of Ministers:

- To provide full answers to the outstanding questions within one month and give an explanation for the delay of each of the three questions.

- To explain the rules and procedures within the Committee of Ministers in answering written questions of the Parliamentary Assembly.