

**Question for written answer E-000100/2019  
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

**Wajid Khan (S&D), Clare Moody (S&D), Mary Honeyball (S&D), Lucy Anderson (S&D) and Seb Dance (S&D)**

Subject: VP/HR - eSwatini

eSwatini held elections in September 2018 in a non-free political environment.

Parties have been banned from political participation since 1973, despite calls from the African Union to change the law.

eSwatini continues to repress political dissent and disregard human rights and the rule of law. The Suppression of Terrorism Act has imposed severe restrictions on civil society and media.

The Public Order Act has also been amended, outlawing criticism of the king and the government.

The situation of women remains dire. Under both customary law and the Marriage Act, married women are assigned a disadvantaged status: for example, they still require the consent of their husbands to enter into certain contracts, including access to credit. Domestic abuse is still widespread.

1. Does the VP/HR believe that the recent national elections in eSwatini were free and fair and that the amendments to the Suppression of Terrorism Act and the Public Order Bill conform to international human rights law?
2. Will the EU call on the UN Human Rights Council to take action on eSwatini in light of the serious human rights violations?
3. Will the VP/HR and EEAS raise the issue of women's conditions with the relevant counterparts in eSwatini, as part of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative?