Question for written answer P-002380/2019

to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)

Rule 138

João Ferreira (GUE/NGL)

Subject: VP/HR - Situation in Western Sahara - ongoing crackdown

According to a communiqué issued by the Polisario Front today, a crackdown of the Sahrawi people living in the occupied territories of Western Sahara and in particular its capital, Laâyoune, began on Friday 19 July.

The Sahrawi had taken to the streets to peacefully celebrate Algeria winning the Africa Cup of Nations and to claim the right to self-determination.

According to the communiqué, Moroccan authorities responded immediately by firing weapons, water cannons and other missiles into the crowd. The communiqué also mentions cases of arbitrary arrests, including of minors, as well as beatings and raids. In the early hours of 20 July, a young Sahrawi woman was run over by a vehicle belonging to the Moroccan authorities. She later died of her injuries.

In view of this situation and of the urgent need to bring it to an end:

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?

2. What immediate steps does it intend to take to put an end to the ongoing repression and the consequences of this?

3. Is it considering proposing to suspend the existing EU-Morocco agreements, given their references to human rights?