

Question for written answer E-000166/2019
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Francisco Assis (S&D)

Subject: VP/HR - Executive measures that call into question the activities and independence of Brazilian NGOs

The newly elected President of Brazil, Jair Bolsonaro, issued a decree at the beginning of January aimed at restricting and imposing conditions on the financing of the country's NGOs; in so doing, he has aligned himself with a worldwide move towards producing legislation intended to reduce civil society space. The authorities claim that the purpose of this measure is to keep a closer eye on these organisations in order to ensure that they complement government action: this is a clear attack on their independence - an indispensable condition for a free and democratic civil society. In 2017, the European Parliament adopted by a majority of 509 votes a report 'on addressing shrinking civil society space in developing countries' in which it calls, inter alia, for the EU 'to proactively address the root causes of shrinking civil society space' (paragraph 18) in third countries and to establish a 'Shrinking Space Monitoring and Early Warning' mechanism capable of triggering a more timely, coordinated and concrete response 'whenever there is evidence that a developing country is preparing serious new restrictions against civil society' (paragraph 27).

How does the EU intend to implement the recommendations contained in this report, particularly in the case of Brazil?