**Question for written answer E-002586/2019**

**to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Julie Ward (S&D)**

Subject: Human rights remain unprotected in Gilgit-Baltistan

In 2018, the OHCHR (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights) observed that the Government of Pakistan maintained that the constitutional and legal structures of Gilgit‑Baltistan adequately protect the rights of its citizens. However, the OHCHR’s monitoring and analysis found that constitutional changes failed to address the main issues that restrict the full enjoyment of all human rights by people living in the region. Furthermore, the Pakistani authorities in Gilgit‑Baltistan have failed to amend similar provisions in the region’s governance rules that restrict the ability to exercise freedom of expression and opinion, and freedom of assembly and association. Many of the complaints have been related to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. This has resulted in forced disappearances and the targeting of political activists, journalists and human rights defenders.

In the light of the foregoing:

1. Has the EEAS consulted civil society and politicians in Gilgit‑Baltistan ahead of any EU-Pakistan dialogue?

2. Will the EEAS request Pakistan to provide further clarity on the situation in Gilgit‑Baltistan, given the content of the OHCHR’s observations contained in its recent reports?

3. As Pakistan is a beneficiary of GSP+, and has ratified the ICCPR Convention, which it is deemed to be violating, will the EEAS consider suspension of these trade preferences?