Question for written answer E-003192/2020/rev.1

to the Commission

Rule 138

Pina Picierno (S&D), Irene Tinagli (S&D), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Massimiliano Smeriglio (S&D), Elisabetta Gualmini (S&D), Pierfrancesco Majorino (S&D), Giuliano Pisapia (S&D), Paolo De Castro (S&D), Alessandra Moretti (S&D)

Subject: Facebook shuts down profile of journalist Mariano Giustino

Mariano Giustino is a freelance Italian journalist who, since 2004, has covered Turkey's domestic and foreign policy (he has lived there since 2010), its relations with Europe and the geopolitical importance of Turkey’s Kurdish minority. On 16 April 2020, Facebook – without warning or justification – shut down the journalist’s personal profile after he posted a story about members of the terrorist organisation ‘Grey Wolves’ being released from prison as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Shutting down his profile means archiving an informed first-hand account of recent events in Turkey. The act deprives Europe of knowledge from a source who often reports on historical events before the national and international media. The shutdown also suggests a tangible threat to his personal and professional safety, since, in Turkey, such acts are often performed under pressure from the authorities and are a harbinger of harsher repression to come.

Can the Commission clarify:

1. whether it is aware of these facts;

2. what measures it intends to take to address the growing media censorship in Turkey; and

3. what measures it intends to take to address the influence of authoritarian regimes on social networks?