

Question for written answer E-004382/2020

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 138

Elisabetta Gualmini (S&D), Alessandra Moretti (S&D), Patrizia Toia (S&D), Pina Picierno (S&D), Giuliano Pisapia (S&D), Dietmar Köster (S&D), Frédérique Ries (Renew), Hilde Vautmans (Renew), Massimiliano Salini (PPE), Fabio Massimo Castaldo (NI), Ernest Urtasun (Verts/ALE), Milan Brglez (S&D), Maria Walsh (PPE), Raphaël Glucksmann (S&D)

Subject: The release of Narges Mohammadi and the impact of COVID-19 on Iranian prisoners

Narges Mohammadi is an Iranian human rights activist. In 2008 she was elected President of the Executive Committee of the National Peace Council in Iran, a broad coalition which aims to avert the danger of an internal military confrontation. She has been arrested several times on account of her human rights activism, as denounced by Amnesty International, among others. The last time, in 2016, she was sentenced to 16 years in prison for directing a campaign for the abolition of the death penalty and denouncing a wave of acid attacks against women.

Her health condition was already very critical and she is now showing symptoms of COVID-19. Despite this, she has not been released, a situation that, because of the pandemic, has befallen many other prisoners on the same charges. She and another 11 women serving sentences in Zanjan prison are showing strong symptoms but are not receiving any medical assistance. Furthermore, for almost a year she has been forbidden from having any telephone contact with her children.

1. Does the VP/HR intend to intercede with the Iranian authorities to ensure that prisoners' rights are respected?
2. Does he intend to intercede with the Iranian authorities to secure the release of Narges Mohammadi, which Parliament called for in its resolution of 19 September 2019?