

**Question for written answer E-000645/2021**

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

Rule 138

**Ernest Urtasun** (Verts/ALE), **Eugenia Rodríguez Palop** (The Left), **Marie Toussaint** (Verts/ALE), **Idoia Villanueva Ruiz** (The Left)

Subject: Programme for the protection of women leaders and human rights defenders in Colombia

The Colombian Ombudsman has warned that female human rights defenders in the country are at increased risk as a result of lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Between January and June 2020, 151 incidents were recorded, including 132 threats of violence, 11 murders and seven assaults. A number of bodies and organisations, including the Ombudsman, the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences and the Somos Defensores (We are defenders) programme, noted an increase in murders, feminicides and other assaults against these women in the context of a general increase in gender-based violence in Colombia since the outbreak of the pandemic. The United Nations Verification Mission stressed that, as a result, it is difficult for women to participate in the implementation of the Peace Agreement and called for progress to be made in the application of the comprehensive programme safeguarding women leaders and human rights defenders.

In the light of the reform of the EU's development cooperation instruments and GAP III, will EU financial and political support for women's rights in Colombia become a priority?

In what respect has the EU supported and will it support the implementation of the comprehensive programme safeguarding women leaders and human rights defenders in Colombia?