

Question for written answer E-002578/2021

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

Rule 138

Fulvio Martusciello (PPE)

Subject: Denial of healthcare, overcrowded conditions and COVID-19 outbreak at Jaw prison in Bahrain

In the past few years, the prison population at Jaw has more than doubled. This serious overcrowding is due in large part to the anti-terrorism law, which prescribes incarceration for a wide range of peaceful activities, including participation in protests, political activity, human rights work and certain acts of free speech.

Amnesty International has previously documented how prisoners at Jaw prison are frequently denied access to adequate healthcare and how poor hygiene has been a long-term concern.

As a result, there has been increasing concern about a major COVID-19 outbreak in the past few weeks. Testimony from prisoners' families paints a bleak picture of current conditions at the prison, where prison authorities have failed to distribute face masks or hand sanitiser, and inmates are forced to buy soap, detergent and towels from the prison shop, known as 'the canteen'.

How will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy respond to the Bahraini authorities' non-compliance with the duty to guarantee the right to health of those in detention and protect them from the risk of infection?