

Question for written answer E-002668/2021

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

Rule 138

Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)

Subject: Repression of popular uprisings in Colombia

Over the past few days thousands of workers, poverty-stricken farmers and young people have organised mass strikes to protest against the Colombian government's policy of raising taxes for ordinary people and imposing unpopular reforms to further privatise the health system.

The protests were met with force by the Duque government's reactionary army, although the State has been tolerating the actions of paramilitary groups targeting popular militants and trade unionists for years. Such groups are formed and supported by a handful of Colombia's big businessmen who use them to terrorise workers who resist the government's unpopular policies. Dozens of people have been arrested or injured by State repression all over the country, and at least 42 people – mostly young people – have lost their lives.

The EU has signed an 'Association Agreement with Colombia', strengthening trade and political ties. In so doing, it is promoting the interests of European monopolies in Latin America and is aligning itself with the US/NATO's dangerous plans in the region, as well as showing strong support for coup leaders such as Juan Guaidó.

In view of the above:

How does the VP/HR view the State crackdown and paramilitary violence in Colombia that has resulted in the deaths of dozens of protesters and in hundreds of people having been arrested and injured?