

**Question for written answer E-003055/2021**

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

Rule 138

**Dietmar Köster (S&D)**

Subject: Women's rights in the United Arab Emirates

Women in the UAE continue to face discrimination in law and in practice. The Personal Status Law of 2005 states that a husband's rights over his wife include the wife's courteous obedience to him (Article 56), and places conditions on a married woman's right to work or leave the house (Article 72). Under Article 356 of the Penal Code, 'voluntary debasement' is punishable. The government is failing to adequately protect women from sexual and domestic violence. Under Article 53 of the Penal Code, a husband's chastisement of his wife is considered an exercise of rights, language that can be interpreted as official approval of spousal abuse.

1. In 2019, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) said the following in a press conference with UAE officials: 'We always welcome the UAE's policies and its efforts to strengthen security and stability in the region, as well as its overall advancement, particularly in the areas of development, youth and women's empowerment, social communication, tolerance and coexistence'. What concrete actions or measures has the VP/HR taken since then to improve the situation on the ground in this regard?
2. What new approaches will the VP/HR adopt in order to put pressure on the UAE to stop violating women's rights?