

Question for written answer E-003288/2021

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

Rule 138

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Subject: Alarming deterioration in migrant workers' rights in the UAE ahead of the Dubai Expo 2020

Arab states have gradually become a hub for migration. Migrant workers currently account for up to 90 % of the domestic and construction workforce in the region. In preparation for the upcoming international fair, Dubai Expo 2020, which will take place from October 2021 to March 2022, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is expanding its construction projects and increasing investments in international companies, to the detriment of migrant workers, who are left voiceless and are very often in danger of losing their lives.

Businesses bear the responsibility for identifying, preventing, mitigating and remedying human rights violations. Yet, what can be seen in the UAE is quite the opposite. Businesses and construction companies coerce workers into signing untranslated documents, confiscate their passports, expose them to extreme working hours in unsafe weather conditions and provide them with unsanitary accommodation.

Furthermore, we must shed light on one of the most urgent issues: migrants working for construction firms are exposed to unbearable levels of heat, leading to many deaths and heart-related health issues.

What measures will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy take to ensure that luxury does not continue to come at the expense of the lives of workers?