

**Question for written answer E-003677/2021
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Idoia Villanueva Ruiz (The Left)

Subject: On protecting the defence of human rights and opposing electronic espionage

Following talks between Israel and other governments, a report in *The Guardian* states that the espionage software Pegasus has been used for surveillance of lawyers, activists and opposition figures. The report mentions, for example, Umar Khalid, activist and trade unionist leader (India), Loujain al Hathloul, a women's rights activist (Saudi Arabia), Eduardo Ferrer Mac-Gregor Poisot, former President of the Inter-American court of human rights (Mexico), the human rights lawyers Rodney Dixon (Great Britain) and Joseph Breham (France), who was allegedly investigated by Morocco, and the fiancée of Jamal Khashoggi, the journalist brutally murdered in the Saudi Arabian Embassy. Politicians targeted for surveillance include at least 50 people close to the Mexican President, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, Rahul Gandhi in India and Carine Kanimba, the daughter of the Rwandan activist Paul Rusesabagina.

In view of this:

1. Will the Commission make representations to Israel insisting that Israeli companies stop interfering in matters over which Europe has sovereignty, such as press protection, opposition, and the defence of human rights on European soil?
2. Will it insist on Morocco explaining why a French lawyer was being investigated on European soil?
3. Will it set in motion a strategy to combat electronic espionage in order to defend democracy's most basic values and the rule of law from these surveillance activities?