

**Question for written answer E-003928/2021/rev.1
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs
and Security Policy**

Rule 138

Isabella Tovaglieri (ID)

Subject: Paralympic athlete Zakia Khudadadi and women's rights in Afghanistan

Zakia Khudadadi, an Afghan athlete, was due to compete at the Tokyo Paralympics from late August to early September 2021; it would have been the first time that a young female athlete had taken part in these competitions for Afghanistan.

However, developments in the domestic situation and the fact that the Taliban have taken control of Kabul have prevented Ms Khudadadi from participating, and the athlete has not, as yet, managed to reach the Olympic venue.

Ms Khudadadi's participation in competitions, over and beyond its sporting value, would have the commendable effect of highlighting the importance of sport for women (until a few years ago women hardly ever practised sport in Afghanistan) and especially the inclusion of people with disabilities, such as the athlete in question.

It is feared that the decision not to allow her to participate is a consequence of the Taliban's unacceptable position that women should be subordinate in society.

In the light of the above, can the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) answer the following:

1. Can the VP/HR in some way support the already many calls for Ms Khudadadi to take part in the Paralympics?
2. Given the latest developments, what view does he take of the women's rights situation in Afghanistan and what means can be used to alleviate the serious level of abuse that seems to be looming for those women?