

Question for written answer E-004213/2021

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: EU action in Tunisia's constitutional crisis

The Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, travelled to Tunisia for his first official visit there, on 9 and 10 September. This visit came in the midst of a serious constitutional crisis following the announcement, on 25 July 2021, by Tunisia's President, Kais Saied, that the special powers he had announced for one month (dismissal of the Prime Minister, full executive power and freezing of Parliament) would now be extended indefinitely. This has been criticised by the parties and by Tunisian civil society, who have also voiced concerns over respect for human rights, including those of women and migrants, and the guarantees for independent public bodies and freedom of expression. Bearing in mind the privileged partnership between the EU and Tunisia:

1. What steps will the EU deploy to protect democracy in the wake of this visit and the meetings the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy had in Tunisia?
2. How will the EU monitor compliance with human rights and ensure fundamental rights are not restricted during this crisis period?
3. Will the EU start to assess the impact that trade treaties, and especially the DCFTA negotiations, are having on the consolidation of democracy and social rights in Tunisia?