

Question for written answer E-004259/2021

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

Rule 138

Fulvio Martusciello (PPE)

Subject: Appalling human rights violations in Bahrain among COVID-19 regulations

Bahrain has never been an example of a country that protects human rights, but since the start of the pandemic the situation has deteriorated further. Amnesty International reports a lack of transparency in the implementation of restrictions in the country.

The authorities, with the intention of limiting COVID-related fake news, have further limited freedom of expression. In addition, Bahrain has no independent media; all local newspapers are owned by the government or by people closely associated with the government.

Prison conditions also raise alarm, as COVID-19 and scabies are rampant among the prison population and no serious protection is afforded to the detainees.

Finally, the most worrying issue is the unfairness of trials. Prosecutors usually pursue mass trials involving hundreds of defendants and the rule of law is not always guaranteed.

In the light of all this, will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy call for sanctions such as those the EU has imposed on other countries with similar conditions?