

**Question for written answer E-001315/2022**

**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: Al-Assad's visit to the UAE: the beginning of the process of rapprochement between Abu Dhabi and Moscow?

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad recently visited the United Arab Emirates. This decision clearly shows that al-Assad is trying to get closer to the Arab states.

This visit was, of course, part of a concerted effort to increase economic and energy cooperation between the two countries, but the geopolitical reasons should not be overlooked. It can not go unnoticed that the Syrian President is a close ally of the Kremlin and that, in 2015, Russia intervened militarily in Syria to support al-Assad's government.

The concern shown by the US over the Syrian President's trip to the UAE is easily explainable. The Biden administration fears a further erosion of its influence in areas of the Middle East that have historically been close to the US. The US risks finding itself progressively isolated.

Given the Ukrainian crisis, to what extent could this also affect the geopolitical stability of the EU?