

Question for written answer E-003904/2022

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: Current political and electoral situation in Bangladesh

The Bangladesh National Party's (BNP) branch in Belgium submitted a petition concerning the imprisonment of its leader and former Prime Minister, Begum Khaleda Zia. The petition reported that severe human rights violations had been committed by the current Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, against her political opponents who primarily belonged to the BNP. According to major news publishers, the current Bangladeshi Government, headed by Prime Minister Hasina, and its party, the Awami League, undertook a massive campaign of political investigations and incarcerations against leaders and members of the BNP. Elections will be held in December 2023, so it is of utmost importance that the current opposition is able to participate without interference from the Bangladeshi Government. In 2020, the US Department of State produced a country annual report on human rights, which raised doubts as to the legality and integrity of elections in Bangladesh.

1. In the light of the evidence provided by the US Department of State and by news agencies, in what way will the Vice-President/High Representative act to ensure that the upcoming electoral process in Bangladesh is carried out fairly and freely?
2. Is the Vice-President/High Representative aware of the charges against BNP members, including against Ms Begum Zia?

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