

**Question for written answer E-001632/2023/rev.1  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Athanasios Konstantinou (NI)**

**Subject:** Illegal actions by the Albanian authorities

Three days before the Albanian elections on 14 May, Fredi Beleris, mayoral candidate for the municipality of Himara, was arrested at his place of business in Himara together with his lawyer and associate. The Albanian authorities detained his associate, Mr Kokavesis, despite the fact that he has recently undergone heart surgery. The arrest was made on charges of 'vote-buying', despite the absence of any complaints to this effect.

Mr Beleris, who belongs to the Greek ethnic minority of Northern Epirus, was elected mayor of Himara, despite being in prison. Although Prime Minister Rama stated that he did not question the election result, the three persons who were arrested remain in detention.

Members of the Greek ethnic minority claim that there are hidden interests behind the arrest, namely land grabbing from the Greek minority. They allege that the land is being misused by individuals affiliated with Mr Rama, such as the husband of the Foreign Affairs Minister, who, by decision of the Council of Ministers, was deemed a strategic investor and allocated a vast swathe of coastal land in Himara for tourism-related projects.

Given that Albania hopes to accede to the European Union and is therefore obliged to act democratically, in compliance with international agreements, can the Commission tell us:

What steps is the Commission going to take to promptly address and prevent illegal actions against the ethnic minority of a Member State?

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