

Question for written answer E-003110/2023

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: Azeri community in Iran – inequality and discrimination

Azeris are the largest and best-integrated ethnic minority in Iran, making up 16 % of its population.

Azerbaijan has deep historical ties with Iran, having been part of the Persian Empire until the 19th century.

The overlapping histories of these nations underpin a scenario of systematic discrimination and oppression enacted by the Iranian regime.

Typically considered second-class citizens, Azeris have endured decades of assimilation policies, demeaning stereotyping and forced relocation. The language, culture and heritage of the South Azerbaijani people are now repressed in various ways.

The political dimension of the South Azerbaijani movement is also subject to repression by the Iranian state apparatus. International organisations, such as Amnesty International, have documented how the Iranian Government often arrests large numbers of people during Azerbaijani demonstrations and cultural events. Every year, numerous Azerbaijani activists are imprisoned, subjected to torture and/or driven into exile because of their efforts to promote the political and cultural rights of Azeris in the south.

What strategy will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy adopt to curb the ayatollahs' oppressive regime and its policy of destroying the historical, political and cultural heritage of the Azeri community?

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