

Question for written answer E-003575/2023/rev.1

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

Rule 138

Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)

Subject: Venezuelan referendum on Guyana's Essequibo territory

On 3 December, the National Assembly of Venezuela held a referendum on the legal status of the territory of Essequibo, which belongs to Guyana¹²³. Under international law, Essequibo is recognised as being part of independent Guyana, covering approximately two thirds of Guyana's land area. The territory became an object of geopolitical interest in 2015, when significant oil resources were discovered there.

The annexation of Essequibo by Venezuela would contravene international law and is absolutely not a matter for Venezuela to decide unilaterally.

1. Does the Vice President/High Representative intend to confirm Guyana's sovereignty and right to territorial integrity and to emphasise respect for international law and agreements?
2. What steps does the Vice President/High Representative intend to take to safeguard the current status of the territory of Essequibo and to condemn the actions of Venezuela?

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¹ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/arielcohen/2023/11/16/venezuela-vs-guyana-the-battle-for-el-essequibos-oil/?sh=30bbc1f8cfa4>

² <https://apnews.com/article/venezuela-guyana-essequibo-territory-dispute-maduro-referendum-d3e65757ca8da2355994ec8a44c148ba>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/dec/04/venezuela-referendum-2023-results-guyana-region-claim-succeeds-sovereignty-essequibo>