Priority question for written answer P-004048/2019/rev.1 to the Commission
Rule 138
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Subject: Election of Valeri Simeonov as Vice-President of the Bulgarian National Assembly and dealing with hate speech

On 20 November 2019, Valeri Simeonov, leader of the National Front for the Salvation of Bulgaria (NFSB), was elected Vice-President of the Bulgarian National Assembly. Simeonov resigned from the post of Deputy Prime Minister following protests against his calling mothers of disabled children ‘squawking women’ with ‘children they pretend are ill’ and after being convicted of hate speech against the Roma, whom he described as ‘beastly humanoids’ with ‘wives with the instincts of street bitches’.

1. How will the Commission ensure that Bulgaria complies with Article 2 TEU and the principles of tolerance, human dignity and the rights of persons belonging to minorities set out therein?

2. In the Guide to the application of Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA, the EU High Level Group on combating racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance recognises that ‘while most Member States have provisions on incitement to racist [...] hatred, these do not always [...] transpose the offences covered by the Framework Decision’. What will the Commission do with regard to this ‘public incitement to [...] hatred directed against a group of persons [...] defined by reference to race, colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin’?