

**Priority question for written answer P-003062/2021
to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs
and Security Policy**

Rule 138

Brando Benifei (S&D)

Subject: Detention of Italian entrepreneur Marco Zennaro in Sudan

Italian entrepreneur Marco Zennaro is currently being detained in Sudan after having been held for weeks by militias on charges of fraud owing to a commercial dispute concerning a consignment of electrical transformers produced by his company and destined for Sudan's electricity company. Mr Zennaro had reached a settlement, paying a sum of EUR 400 000 to intermediary Ayman Gallabi, who had withdrawn the complaint but was found dead (killed) a few days later. On 1 April Mr Zennaro was once again arrested, before he could reach his return flight to Italy, and has since been detained. An additional EUR 700 000 has been requested by the financier of the Gallabi Company, close to the government regime since the 2019 coup. Until the mission of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in early June, which unfortunately failed, his prison conditions were very harsh. He was held in a small cell shared with 30 inmates, in a temperature of 45°C, poor hygienic conditions and without beds, with repeated threats from guards alluding to Giulio Regeni if he did not pay. In view of this:

1. Is the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy aware of this case?
2. Will he activate all diplomatic channels, in cooperation with the Italian authorities, to call for Mr Zennaro's immediate release?