

**Question for written answer E-002571/2023/rev.1**

**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: Swedish citizen held hostage by Iran for over 500 days

The *New York Times* has revealed that a Swedish citizen, an employee of the European External Action Service (EEAS), has been detained by the Iranian regime for over 500 days. His detention has been kept secret, which has allowed Iran to use him as a tool in negotiations with the EU, at a time when the EU needs to exert maximum pressure on the Iranian regime. This is one of many such opportunistic cases of hostage diplomacy perpetrated by Iran.

1. When will the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (VP/HR) publicly demand that the EEAS employee concerned, along with all European hostages held by the Iranian regime, be released?
2. What more does the Iranian regime have to do before the Iranian Ambassador to the EU is expelled?
3. Does the VP/HR agree that the use of silent diplomacy in this case severely damages the EU's ability to handle its geopolitical relations with Iran?

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