

Question for written answer E-003445/2014
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 117
Fiorello Provera (EFD)

Subject: VP/HR - Iranian arms shipments to the Gaza Strip

On 8 March 2014, Israel intercepted a ship in the Red Sea called the Klos C. The ship was under surveillance as it travelled from Syria to the Iranian port of Bandar Abbas, Iraq and then into the Red Sea. A large cache of weapons was found on board, sealed in large shipping containers behind bags of cement. 'Made in the Islamic Republic' was stamped on each of the bags. According to the *Washington Post*, the weapons unloaded included 40 M-302 surface-to-surface rockets with ranges of 50-100 miles. More than 181 mortar shells and 400 000 rounds of ammunition were also found.

The weapons were displayed in Eilat, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said this proved that Iran cannot be trusted. The Iranian Government claims that the Americans and the Israelis set up the seizure. Brigadier General Masoud Jazayeri of the Iranian armed forces told Iran's semi-official Fars news agency that 'the Americans and the Zionists probably ordered (from) Hollywood the production of a movie with the scenario of a cargo ship carrying Iranian weapons to Gaza in Palestine.'

1. What is the position of the Vice-President / High Representative on Israel's discovery of a large shipment of conventional arms to the Gaza Strip?
2. What steps is the VP / HR prepared to take in asking the Iranian Government about its support for militant groups in the region, such as Hamas, which depend on supplies of Iranian arms?
3. What efforts is the EU making to question Iran over the role of the Army of the Guardians of the Islamic Revolution in developing conventional weapons, an element often overlooked during recent nuclear negotiations?