

**Question for written answer E-009433/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Maite Pagazaurtundúa Ruiz (ALDE)

Subject: Operation Triton

The Italian navy has been patrolling international waters between Italy and North Africa in a proactive way, rescuing boats in danger and saving hundreds of thousands of lives. However, since the beginning of November, the Italian navy has been replaced by a new multinational European force called Operation Triton.

This operation is much smaller, with a third of the budget of the Italian operation, and has just seven boats, two aeroplanes and a helicopter.

Frontex has said that Triton will focus purely on controlling and monitoring borders. The UN Special Envoy has already expressed concern that such a limited patrol area might put many lives at risk.

The Italian navy conducted search and save missions, including along the coast of Libya, whereas Triton is operating only within 30 nautical miles of the Italian coast.

Without in any way criticising those involved in the operation,

1. Can the Commission describe the specific functions of Operation Triton?
2. Does the Commission not think that its scope is limited? What orders have been given should a boat be in danger outside the patrol zone?
3. Does the Commission think the operation has sufficient human resources?