Question for written answer E-001961/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Alessia Maria Mosca (S&D)

Subject: Possible risks associated with increased exports of Tunisian olive oil to the European market

The European Commission has recently introduced more flexible rules on preferential imports of Tunisian olive oil, duty-free and exempt from customs tariffs, between February and October this year. Although the annual maximum quota will continue to be as set under Community Regulation (EC) No 1918/2006, limits on monthly imports will be less rigid. It will be possible to import a maximum of 9 000 tonnes per month in February and March and 8 000 tonnes from April to October. This decision is motivated by a desire to support the country in its democratic process by instigating a privileged partnership in the light of the recent parliamentary and presidential elections. Increased imports should provide support for a sector grappling with low olive oil availability resulting from the abysmal olive oil seasons in Spain and Italy and should also have an impact on costs.

In the light of the above, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does the Commission not accept that there is a risk of further major consequences for the internal market, such as the admission of products for which it may not be possible to guarantee existing quality and safety standards for consumers?

2. Can the Commission indicate the urgent measures it intends to take to limit destabilisation of the internal olive oil market, in particular through exceptional compensatory and stabilisation methods to support European producers?