

**Question for written answer E-007257/2015
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 130
Joëlle Bergeron (EFDD)

Subject: VP/HR - Australian solution to the issue of refugees

Following yet another tragedy which cost the lives of hundreds of African refugees in the Mediterranean, on Tuesday 21 April 2015 the Australian Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, advised the EU to adopt Australia's Operation Sovereign Borders approach to dealing with refugees, which consists in sending all vessels carrying refugees that are intercepted at sea back to their country of origin.

The Australian Government intercepts all vessels illegally attempting to reach the Australian coast and expels them from the country's territorial waters.

According to Tony Abbott, this is the only effective means of combating human trafficking and stopping so many people from drowning in the Mediterranean. Paradoxically, this strict policy is the least costly in terms of human lives.

What does the High Representative think of the statements made by the Australian Prime Minister?

Does she think that the same approach could be taken by the EU?