

**Question for written answer E-008000/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Hugues Bayet (S&D)

Subject: Development aid for Eritrea

According to several sources, the 11th European Development Fund should be allocating a EUR 312 million aid package to Eritrea very soon. That represents a tripling of European aid relative to 2009.

Yet this country in the Horn of Africa is one of the world's worst dictatorships. It is ruled with an iron fist by the dictator Isaias Afwerki, in power since 1991. We have lost count of the attacks on individual freedoms and human rights in Eritrea. For example, UN experts recently stated that the use of torture was widespread in the country.

The fact that numerous Eritreans flee the country every day is proof of their suffering. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 350 000 people have fled the country in 10 years. According to the International Organisation for Migration, over 34 000 reached the Italian coast in 2014.

1. How can the EU, which advocates the values of the rule of law and democracy, support such a regime?
2. Is this aid mainly intended to prevent Eritreans from fleeing their country and, therefore, reaching the EU?