

**Question for written answer E-014126/2015
to the Council**

Rule 130

Peter van Dalen (ECR)

Subject: Norway and Atlanto Scandic herring

Norway has barred European vessels from access to the waters around Spitsbergen. However, Spitsbergen is not 'normal' Norwegian territory but is regulated by the Spitsbergen Treaty of 1920. Thus Norway cannot unilaterally deny access to fisheries in these waters. This is causing serious damage, particularly to fishermen who fish for Atlanto Scandic herring. The Commission has visited the Norwegians, but returned to Brussels empty-handed. The 'note verbale' which was drafted, setting out the position, also had little effect. The Commission does not seem genuinely willing to adopt a strong approach to this problem.

1. Is the Council prepared to intervene in this matter and thus put pressure on Norway?
2. What possible further action could be taken if Norway continues to deny access to the waters around Spitsbergen?
3. Does the Council consider that it might be possible to bring the matter before an international tribunal, for example the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in Hamburg?