

Question for written answer E-016119/2015
to the Council
Rule 130
Miltiadis Kyrkos (S&D)

Subject: Discrimination against refugees

As reported by Het Laatste Nieuws and De Morgen, Belgium carried out an operation characterised by a great deal of secrecy last week, to help 37 Christians escape Syria and reach Belgium. This was confirmed by the office of Theo Francken, State Secretary for Asylum. It was a repeated operation, since it had helped another 244 Christians from Aleppo not that long ago.

Under the 1951 Geneva Convention, refugees have the same rights when fleeing their country for fear of persecution, whether they are Christians, Muslims or atheists.

According to Commission decisions on resettlement and relocation, everyone has that right, irrespective of race, religion, ethnicity, social group or political opinions.

In view of the above, can the Council answer the following questions:

- Is the Council aware of this practice by Belgium or other countries?
- Are those refugees in addition to the number of refugees that each country will receive under the relocation and resettlement mechanism accepted by the Council, or does this rather reveal an attempt to put into place criteria for distinguishing between refugees, in breach of the Commission decisions?