

**Question for written answer E-001384/2016**  
**to the Commission**  
Rule 130  
**Bodil Valero (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Criminalising civil society's humanitarian assistance to refugees

In the wake of the refugee crisis and the failure of politicians to take appropriate action, civil society stepped up to the mark. For months NGOs, local communities and volunteers have been assisting and helping refugees and migrants arriving in the EU. According to a Statewatch article, the draft Council conclusions on migrant smuggling, dated 26 January 2016, allude to the criminalisation of NGOs, individuals and volunteers working to assist refugees.

1. Does the Commission share the Council's views expressed in the conclusions regarding the criminalisation of those who provide humanitarian assistance to refugees and migrants in distress?
2. What is the Commission's stand on this matter? Is it reflected in its EU Action Plan against migrants smuggling 2015-2020?
3. There seem to be uncertainties and divergences around how the exciting provisions of the EU's 2004 Facilitation Directive are being implemented. Does the Commission intend to revise the legal framework? If so, when?