

Question for written answer E-001773/2016
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
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Subject: VP/HR - push-backs by NATO

On 23 February 2016, the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs met with Jens Stoltenberg, the NATO Secretary-General, who spoke about NATO's new mission in the Mediterranean to 'help end Europe's refugee crisis' and support Frontex in its efforts to tackle illegal immigration. This EU-NATO cooperation will play an important role in combating threats and preventing attacks, he maintained.

The decision to involve NATO in managing the refugee crisis was not only an unprecedented step towards the militarisation of Europe's borders, but also reinforced the notion that immigration and the influx of refugees can only be controlled by strengthening border security.

Ms Mogherini has repeatedly stated that there will be no push-backs and Mr Stoltenberg confirmed this in a press release. However, Mr Stoltenberg did tell the Committee on Foreign Affairs that boats intercepted en route from Turkey would immediately be sent back there without the refugees being given the right to apply for asylum, which would be a breach of international law.

Can the Vice-President/High Representative clarify this matter?