

**Question for written answer E-003066/2016/rev.1**  
**to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**  
Rule 130  
**Mariya Gabriel (PPE)**

Subject: VP/HR - Upcoming phases of Operation Sophia

The EU operation to combat migrant smuggling in the Mediterranean Sea – known as EUNAVFOR MED or Operation Sophia – was established by the Council on 18 May 2015. After a first phase of intelligence gathering on smuggling networks, Operation Sophia entered its operational phase, aimed at seizing on the high seas vessels suspected of being used for human smuggling and trafficking.

In view of the upcoming phases (2B and 3), can the Vice-President / High Representative answer the following questions:

- What is the timetable currently envisaged for moving to phases 2B and 3?
- As regards human resources, Operation Sophia currently has 1 300 officials from 22 Member States. Is this sufficient, particularly in view of the upcoming phase?
- The prosecution of smugglers currently takes place in Italy. What will the possible options be for phases 2B and 3, as a new legal basis will have to be negotiated together with the Libyan authorities?