

Question for written answer E-004203/2016
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)
Rule 130
Charles Tannock (ECR)

Subject: VP/HR - EUNAVFOR Med's Operation Sophia

The House of Lords EU Select Committee published a report on 13 May 2016 with regard to the EUNAVFOR Med's Operation Sophia.

Developments are noted, such as a change in the business model operated by smugglers as a result of this operation. For instance, the transition to inflatable rubber crafts to protect against financial loss in the event that boats are destroyed.

The chief observation of the report appears to be that Operation Sophia has achieved all that it can in terms of Phase 1's intelligence gathering mission and that its further use will only be proven in progressing to Phases 2 and 3. Further expansion in terms of geographic area is also advised against for fear of duplicating work performed by existing NATO and FRONTEX missions in the region.

1. Has the VP/HR engaged in recent talks with the Government of National Accord in Libya with a view to making progress in progressing to Phases 2 and 3 of Operation Sophia?
2. Will the VP/HR seek to renew the mission in July 2016 at the end of its mandate even if progress in Phases 2 and 3 have failed to materialise, reflecting the fact that such missions take time to fully establish themselves?