

**Question for written answer E-006395/2016  
to the Council**  
Rule 130  
**Marie-Christine Arnautu (ENF)**

Subject: Extension of the embargo on Syria

On 27 May 2016, the Council extended the European Union embargo on Syria.

While the Syrian Government, with the support of Russia and Iran, is on the offensive to retake the positions occupied by rebel and jihadist groups, particularly districts of Aleppo, those European sanctions remain incomprehensible.

By refusing to cooperate with the Syrian Government, which is fighting armed factions within its territory, the Union and certain Member States are playing into the hands of the Islamists, who have control over whole areas of the country and are delaying any resolution of the conflict, whether military and diplomatic or humanitarian. The excessive and obstinate hostility of a number of European leaders towards the legitimate government of Syria is preventing any constructive dialogue and blocking the way to a political transition. There is therefore an urgent need for the Union to normalise its diplomatic relations with Syria to enable peace to be restored.

On a related subject, as the war has destroyed the Syrian economy, more peaceful relations with the country's legitimate authorities would unquestionably have beneficial results for its people.

Would the Council therefore be willing to adopt a more flexible attitude towards the Syrian Government, particularly by lifting the embargo on Syria?