

**Question for written answer E-007948/2016/rev.1  
to the Council**

Rule 130

**Marie-Christine Arnautu (ENF)**

Subject: Council position on warring parties in Syria

On 17 October 2016, the Council released a statement in which it said that it would continue to support the 'efforts' of the Syrian opposition forces, and that it condemned Russian activities in Syria, stopping short of calling for further sanctions against Russia. By contrast, the UK, like the US, is pushing for further sanctions, even though EU High Representative Federica Mogherini has recently dismissed this course of action in favour of heavier EU sanctions against Syria.

Instead of cooperating with Russia and the Syrian Government, as many experts advise, the EU is engaged in a counter-productive strategy that is impeding conflict resolution. It defies comprehension that the western states and their allies are still supplying arms to the rebels, who they are falsely labelling as moderates, according to former Al-Nusra hostage Theo Padnos.

Can the Council:

1. clarify its relationship with the Syrian Government?
2. clarify the exact nature of its political and/or military support for the Syrian opposition forces?
3. explain why it claims that there is no 'military solution' to the Syrian conflict when it supports international coalition offensives in Iraq?