

**Question for written answer E-003144/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL)

Subject: The EU's refugee policy and the case of the Aquarius ship

Today the international press reported that Spain's Prime Minister has ordered the port of Valencia to receive the Aquarius – source: German NGO SOS Méditerranée – , a ship which was refused docking by Italy and Malta and has 629 refugees aboard. Several Italian cities, including Palermo, Naples, Messina and Reggio Calabria, said they were willing to receive the ship, but were prevented from doing so by order of the Italian Ministry for Transport.

This situation highlights that the policy for refugees imposed by the EU has failed. It places an emphasis on firm entry barriers and particularly encourages illegal networks to make Mediterranean crossings.

Can the Commission say what it thinks of this situation, in which a number of the fundamental rights of refugees have been violated?

Can the Commission also say if it thinks it is time to reverse the policy of externalising the European Union's borders with regard to refugees, namely by opening up humanitarian corridors and legal channels?