

**Question for written answer P-002399/2019
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 138

**Raffaele Stancanelli (ECR), Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Raffaele Fitto (ECR), Nicola Procaccini (ECR)
and Pietro Fiocchi (ECR)**

Subject: VP/HR - Judgment in the case of the Italian marines Massimiliano Latorre and Salvatore Girone and EU support for Italy

The International Court of Justice in The Hague has been asked to decide whether India or Italy is competent to judge marines Latorre and Girone. As Ambassador Francesco Azzarello has recalled, jurisdiction over the case belongs to Italy, as the two marines are Italian state officials who were engaged on board a vessel flying the Italian flag in international waters, as part of Atalanta, the EU anti-piracy operation.

Ambassador Azzarello has pointed out that: 'in the eyes of India, there is no presumption of innocence: the marines were guilty of murder even before the charges were brought.'

In the light of the above, will the VP/HR say:

- 1) Pending the ruling of the International Court of Justice, and with due respect for the relative prerogatives, will she support the request of the Italian State?
- 2) In the light of the positions expressed by the Indian authorities, which are in odds with the general principle of legal culture of the presumption of innocence, will she support the reasons adduced by Italy, drawing on the diplomatic and economic instruments that are available to the EU in its dealings with India?