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WRITTEN DECLARATION

submitted under Rule 136 of the Rules of Procedure

on the ‘fish war’ and the safety of fishermen

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Written declaration, under Rule 136 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, on the 'fish war' and the safety of fishermen¹

1. Fisheries are a natural and renewable resource, a part of our common heritage (Article 38 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) which everybody should respect. However, in the area of sea between the south coasts of Italy and Libya (just 205 km wide), European fishermen have to comply with the strict requirements of EU law, while their fellow fishermen from Libya, Tunisia and other countries are not obliged to comply with any fishing rules.
2. Moreover, there are very frequent acts of violence in this area, which have involved the seizure of fishing vessels by naval units from the North African coastal countries, forced detention of fishermen in Libyan prisons, and several deaths from gunfire.
3. The EU is responsible for ensuring respect for human rights, including the social and economic rights of fishermen. Fishing rights are crucial for the development of sustainable and accountable fisheries, and all states are called upon to respect fully the political, civil, social and safety rights of fishermen.
4. The reform of the common fisheries policy underlines the Union's strong interest in simplified governance.
5. The Commission is hence called upon to monitor these rights closely and to identify, in close cooperation with Member States, possible ways to protect the safety of fishermen.
6. This declaration, together with the names of the signatories, is forwarded to the Commission.

¹ Under Rule 136(4) and (5) of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, where a declaration is signed by a majority of Parliament's component Members, it is published in the minutes with the names of its signatories and forwarded to the addressees, without however binding Parliament.