

**Question for written answer E-011300/2012
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Debora Serracchiani (S&D)

Subject: Grimaldi vessel refused access in Tunisia

On 6 November this year, the Tunisian Ministry of Transport and the country's Merchant Navy and Ports Authority (OMMP) authorised the Grimaldi Group and this claimant, Atlantica, to provide a RORO transport service from Italy (Genoa, Livorno, Palermo) to the port of La Goulette (Tunis), thus allowing the Grimaldi Group access to the Genoa-Tunis Motorway of the Sea market in accordance with the provisions of current European legislation.

On 23 November 2012, the Tunis office of Atlantica received notification from the OMMP denying the Eurocargo Bari vessel access to the port of La Goulette owing to congestion problems inside the port. 10 days have passed since then but the OMMP is inexplicably continuing to refuse access, thus leaving the vessel in the roadsteads and causing huge losses.

An investigation carried out in the presence of Italian diplomats has revealed that the Tunisian authorities are preventing the Grimaldi Group from accessing the market for the Genoa-Tunis route in order to support the national shipping line (Cotunav) and thus abusing their dominant position through the exclusive right to the Genoa-Tunis market.

1. Considering that, on 1 January 2008, Tunisia entered the free trade zone with Europe, after a transitional period of twelve years which began in 1995 with the signature of the association agreement between Tunisia and the European Union, does the Commission judge that such behaviour marks an infringement of the regulations which govern the trade relationship between the EU and Tunisia?
2. If so, which measures does it intend to take to ensure that the prevailing laws, including the terms of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union regarding competition (Articles 101 and 102) are adhered to?