

**Question for written answer E-003071/2014  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Takis Hadjigeorgiou (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Revival of the issue of a regulation on direct trade

It has been reported in the Cypriot press that circles in the European Union, and in particular the Commission, are preparing to revive the issue of direct trade with the occupied territories in Cyprus experimentally on the basis of a recommendation made by **Niccolò Rinaldi**, MEP, at an INTA Committee meeting on 13 March 2014.

The proposal by Mr Rinaldi, who is also the rapporteur of the report on the Regulation, was presented unexpectedly on 13 March and recommends that the regulation be resubmitted for approval with the following four new changes:

- 'A more appropriate title would be: Temporary/transitional provisions in order to facilitate trade for the Northern part of the Republic of Cyprus as part of the Republic of Cyprus';
- The establishment of a supervisory body in charge of dealing with trade;
- A five-year trial implementation period;
- Creating the conditions to increase the volume of trade.

It should be recalled that this proposal/initiative is at odds with the recent opinion of the European Parliament's Legal Service and of the Committee on Legal Affairs (JURI) on the subject which notes in that regard that the legal basis chosen by the Commission for the adoption of the regulation is not appropriate (as it refers to a third country rather than to the occupied territories of an EU Member State) and that such a regulation would undermine the sovereign rights of the Republic of Cyprus.

Also the proposal for 'direct trade' is contrary to the EU decision on providing financial support for the Turkish Cypriot community, with emphasis on the economic integration of the island and on improving contacts between the two communities, aimed at the reunification of Cyprus.

Given the resumption of talks, does the Commission agree that putting this issue back on the agenda runs the risk of weakening the incentives to solve the Cyprus problem?