

**Question for written answer E-003461/2019
to the Commission
Rule 138
Erik Marquardt**

Subject: Return of refugees from Malta's Search and Rescue (SAR) Zone to Libya

At 15.55 CET on Friday 18 October, Malta's armed forces received word that a boat with approximately 50 people on board was in distress. Although the boat was in the Maltese SAR Zone (34°47'N, 012°37'E), it was returned to Libya, a war zone, a few hours later by the Libyan Coast Guard rather than to the next safe harbour, as required by international law.

- 1 How does the Commission view this process from a legal point of view?
- 2 How and within what timeframe will the Commission raise this issue with the Maltese government?
- 3 In the Commission's view, should Rescue Co-ordination Centres (RCCs) report publicly on maritime rescue cases so that ships in the area can come to the rescue?