

**Question for written answer E-003098/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Dominique Bilde (ID)

Subject: Locust invasion in Africa and need for preventive action

Since July-October 2019, the Horn of Africa has been confronted with an invasion of locusts of unusual proportions – the worst in 25 years in Ethiopia and 70 years in Kenya ¹ – with 11.9 million people already facing serious food insecurity in the region and the danger that 20 million people might find themselves in the same situation.

On 27 February 2020, the Commission announced the release of an further 10 million euros ². The assistance follows a request by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which initially estimated that 70 million dollars would be needed.

According to specialist Cyril Piou ³, the cost of the measures envisaged by the FAO, which include extremely costly aerial operations, can be explained in part by a lack of preparedness. The crisis, said to be rooted in Yemen, was in fact predictable. Timely preventive measures would have prevented such a dramatic situation from evolving.

Together with the FAO, how will the Commission help the countries concerned to boost preventive measures in order to avoid emergency funds being released and a disastrous cost in human terms?

¹ 'The locust invasion is the worst infestation in Kenya for 70 years and the worst in Somalia and Ethiopia for 25 years.' <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-51501832>

² https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_20_345

³ <https://www.letemps.ch/sciences/cyril-piou-contre-criquets-prevention-meilleure-reponse>