

**Question for written answer E-003507/2020
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Illegal hydrocarbon exploration and drilling by Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean

At a critical time for stability in the Eastern Mediterranean, Turkey is continuing its acts of provocation, announcing that its state oil company, TRAO, will begin in the near future hydrocarbon exploration and drilling in blocks 15 and 20, located south of Crete and within the coastal zone of Crete and the Greek continental shelf, respectively. Greece published the coordinates of these sections in the Official Journal of the EU of 13.11.2014 ¹ and the Greek State awarded concessions for these blocks to the companies Exxon-Mobil, Total and Elpe on 27.6.2019. These illegal actions by Turkey, which has not signed the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), are the result of its military involvement in the region and the Turkey-Libya Memorandum of Understanding on the delimitation of maritime jurisdictions in the Mediterranean Sea, characterised as illegal by the Council in its conclusions of December 2019 ². At the same time, TRAO has already illegally applied for a permit for exploration work and extraction in 7 locations located within the Greek and Cypriot continental shelf, east of Crete and Rhodes and west of Cyprus.

In view of this, will the Commission say:

What measures does it intend to take to address the above illegal actions within the Greek and Cypriot continental shelf and Greece's coastal zone, which violate International Maritime Law, the sovereignty of EU Member States and the principle of good neighbourly relations?

¹ Notice from the Government of the Hellenic Republic concerning Directive 94/22/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions for granting and using authorisations for the prospection, exploration and production of hydrocarbons (2014/C 400/03), <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=OJ%3AC%3A2014%3A400%3ATOC>

² Conclusions of the European Council Meeting (12 December 2019), <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/41780/12-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>