

**Question for written answer E-004358/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Jean-Paul Garraud** (ID)

**Subject:** Combating the networks which smuggle migrants into the European Union

On 13 July 2020, Commissioner Ylva Johansson and 10 European and African interior ministers attended an EU-Africa meeting on measures to combat illegal immigration.

The increase in the number of arrivals is becoming very alarming: according to the Italian Interior Minister, between 1 January and 13 July 2020 a total of 8988 migrants arrived on Italian shores, as against 3165 over the same period in 2019, and almost 1000 migrants were picked up and taken to Lampedusa in slightly less than four days, from 9 to 12 July 2020.

Although this phenomenon is encouraged by non-governmental organisations and the ineffectiveness of the procedures for returning migrants to their countries of origin, networks of people smugglers have a lot to do with the wave of arrivals. The Commissioner responded to these statistics by saying that legal migration to the European Union was one means of combating the networks.

Setting aside the Commissioner's apparent willingness to legalise illegal immigration, does the Commission plan to work with the Member States and African states in other ways to combat the networks of people smugglers?