

**Question for written answer E-005537/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Release of Italian fishermen in Libya and violations of limits for territorial waters

As laid down in Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, signed at Montego Bay, every State is free to establish the breadth of its territorial waters up to a limit not exceeding 12 nautical miles.

Some states, such as Libya, arbitrarily enforce limits that are more than double this, creating situations that are extremely dangerous, as demonstrated by the imprisonment of the Sicilian fishermen still being held in Libyan gaols.

This situation is utterly absurd given that the Sicilian coastline is constantly being besieged by North African fishermen who venture as far as three miles off the coast, not just plundering Italy's fish stocks but also obstructing legal fishing by Italian fishermen who are fully entitled to be there.

In view of the above:

1. What will the Commission do to ensure limits laid down in international maritime law are respected?
2. How will it help Member States that suffer repeated violations of these limits, such as those occurring along the Sicilian coastline in Italy?