Question for written answer E-000522/2021

to the Commission

Rule 138

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Subject: Request by Cape Verde for a temporary derogation from the rules of preferential origin

In March 2020, Cape Verde submitted a request for a temporary derogation from the rules of preferential origin to the EU, claiming, as in previous years, that it has an extremely small national fishing fleet operating outside its territorial waters engaged in the fishing and canning of tuna, mackerel and frigate tuna. In July, Cape Verde replied with additional information on the issues raised by the European Commission in the meantime. Still, the Commission has not approved Cape Verde’s request.

The livelihoods of about 1700 families on the island of Saint Vincent in Cape Verde, a country deeply affected by the tourism crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, are under threat because an undertaking based there cannot export canned products to Europe. Job losses have already started with the dismissal of 104 workers this month.

We would like to know:

1. When will the Commission approve the new temporary derogation from the rules of origin for canned tuna, mackerel and frigate tuna for Cape Verde?

2. Will the approval have retroactive effect from 1 January 2021?

3. What is the reason for the delayed decision by the Commission?