

Question for written answer E-003472/2021

to the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Rule 138

Ivan Vilibor Sinčić (NI)

Subject: UAE gold smuggling in Africa and lack of transparency from the Emirati authorities

Customs data shows that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) imported USD 15.1 billion worth of gold from Africa in 2016. Much of the gold was not recorded in the exports of African states. Five trade economists interviewed by credible news agencies said this indicates large amounts of gold are leaving Africa with no taxes being paid to the states that produce them.

The UAE has imported unrefined gold worth billions of dollars from African states since 2006, as rising gold prices after the 2008 financial crisis encouraged informal mining.

When investigated, the Dubai Customs Authority referred credible news agencies' queries to the UAE foreign ministry, which did not respond. The UAE Government Media Office then referred these news agencies to the UAE Federal Customs Authority, which did not respond either.

Considering that the UAE is part of the EU-Gulf Cooperation Council free trade agreement, what has the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy done to guarantee that the relevant laws are fully respected?