

**Question for written answer E-000080/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Suspension of the payment of funds to Morocco pending the completion of investigations into the 'Qatargate' financial scandal

At a press conference held on 5 January 2023, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Josep Borrell, and the Moroccan Minister for Foreign Affairs, Nasser Bourita, announced that EU-Morocco relations were to be strengthened. Apart from the financing agreements worth almost EUR 500 million already envisaged for 2022/2023, Morocco is due to receive EUR 1.6 billion from the EU over the period 2021-2027, which is the most of any country in the region. According to Mr Bourita, the partnership between the EU and Morocco has three dimensions: neighbourhood, values and interests. Besides this, the EU Vice-President / High Representative announced the launch of two new initiatives for 2023: a high-level security dialogue, which is due to take place shortly in the capital of Morocco; and enhanced cooperation between the EU and Morocco in multilateral bodies.

Given the above:

1. Does the Commission not think that the payment of funds to Morocco should be suspended pending the completion of investigations into the 'Qatargate' financial scandal, in which Morocco also seems to have been involved?
2. Does it not feel, given the serious economic crisis in Europe, that current and future financial agreements should be suspended and the financial resources allocated to small and medium-sized enterprises and EU citizens in difficulty?

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