

**Question for oral answer O-000098/2012
to the Council**

Rule 115

Judith Sargentini, François Alfonsi, Franziska Katharina Brantner, Malika Benarab-Attou, Reinhard Bütikofer, Tarja Cronberg, Hélène Flautre, Martin Häusling, Franziska Keller, Nicole Kiil-Nielsen, Jean Lambert, Barbara Lochbihler, Ulrike Lunacek, Raül Romeva i Rueda, Bart Staes, Rui Tavares, Keith Taylor, Helga Trüpel, Tatjana Ždanoka
on behalf of the Verts/ALE Group

Subject: Report by the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly: 'Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea: who is responsible?'

On 29 March 2012, Dr Tineke Strik, the rapporteur for the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's Committee on Migration, presented her report, 'Lives lost in the Mediterranean Sea: who is responsible?' (http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2012/20120329_mig_RPT.EN.pdf). The report focuses on the tragedy involving a rubber boat carrying 73 people that left Tripoli on 26 March 2011. Sixty-three of those people died on board. Other issues dealt with in the report include establishing responsibility with regard to search and rescue, and assisting a vessel in distress.

- Does the Council concur with the report's conclusion that (taking into account the known facts) the two navy vessels that were in the vicinity of the boat should have taken action to save the lives of the people on board? What is the Council's view of the fact that Spain and Italy, the two Member States with navy vessels in the vicinity of the boat concerned, did not take action to save the lives of the people on board? Is the Council willing to ask why both Member States refrained from taking action? If not, why not?
- Does the Council concur with the report's conclusion that, if a search and rescue zone is not covered because the State responsible for that zone fails to abide by its legal 'duty to render assistance', then the State that receives the initial call for assistance is responsible for coordinating the search and rescue operation? If the Council agrees with that, is it willing to ask the Italian authorities why they failed to coordinate a search and rescue operation in this case? If not, can the Council indicate who it thinks should take on the responsibility of coordinating a search and rescue operation?
- Did the Council have any contact with NATO on this matter and, if so, what was the purpose and result thereof? Is the Council willing to ensure that all relevant information concerning this incident, including satellite imagery, is provided to the relevant committee(s) in Parliament? If not, why not?
- What is the Council's view on the division of responsibility among the various entities involved – i.e. NATO and the Member States – as regards rendering assistance to vessels in distress in such cases?

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Forwarded: 13.4.2012

Deadline for reply: 4.5.2012