

**Question for oral answer O-000059/2017  
to the Commission**

Rule 128

**Sylvie Guillaume, Julie Ward, Ana Gomes, Paul Tang, Jean-Paul Denanot, Louis-Joseph Manscour, Edouard Martin, Gilles Pargneaux, Vincent Peillon, Christine Revault D'Allonnes Bonnefoy, Virginie Rozière, Anna Hedh, Tanja Fajon, Agnes Jongerius, Eric Andrieu, Elly Schlein, Nessa Childers, Cécile Kashetu Kyenge, Miroslav Poche, Eva Kaili, Péter Niedermüller, Nikos Androulakis, Marlene Mizzi, Eva Joly, Rebecca Harms, Judith Sargentini, Jean Lambert, Bart Staes, Michèle Rivasi, Barbara Lochbihler, Barbara Spinelli, Lola Sánchez Caldentey, Nikolaos Chountis, Sabine Lösing, Sylvia-Yvonne Kaufmann, Maria Grapini, Birgit Sippel, Peter Kouroumbashev, Josef Weidenholzer, Soraya Post, Philippe Lamberts, Pascal Durand**

Subject: Refoulement of Turkish nationals by the Greek authorities

On 6 June 2017, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) issued a statement denouncing the *refoulement* of Turkish nationals by the Greek authorities. According to the information available to the FIDH, a group of Turkish nationals wishing to apply for international protection in Greece in order to escape persecution in Turkey was handed over by the Greek police to a unit of armed and masked men on 2 June 2017 in Evros, in order to be sent back to Turkey.

The main element of asylum and refugee status is protection against return to a country where the concerned person has reasons to fear persecution. This protection is formalised in the principle of *non-refoulement*, defined in Article 33(1) of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (or the Geneva Convention) as follows: 'No Contracting State shall expel or return ('refouler') a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.' This dimension also appears in Directive 2013/32/EU of 26 June 2013 on common procedures for granting and withdrawing international protection. Greece is a party to the Geneva Convention and bound by the aforementioned directive.

Hence, several questions arise:

- Does the Commission intend to question the Greek authorities on this matter?
- If the facts are proven, what does the Commission intend to do?
- Can the Commission guarantee absolute respect for the principle of *non-refoulement* as defined by the Geneva Convention?

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Deadline for reply: 5.7.2017