

**Question for written answer P-001059/2013/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Krisztina Morvai (NI)

Subject: Need for the EU to rescue its citizens held as hostages abroad

According to her international cry for help and a long list of reliable evidence, a woman who is a citizen of the EU and of Hungary has been severely battered by her husband, a French citizen, for several years now and ever since her pregnancy. The violence took place in front of the child, and the father not only threatened the wife with killing her, but also with committing suicide with the little boy. It follows that the child has been also severely abused and both victims have been in serious danger. As an integral part of a complex process of domestic violence the husband took the family to the French Polynesian island of Bora Bora, promising a long and relaxing holiday and a last and serious attempt to save their marriage and family life. As it later turned out, he only wanted to falsely 'establish' jurisdiction in French Polynesia in order to obtain sole custody of the child and 'take the child away from his mother', using his financial resources and high society connections in a jurisdiction with which none of them have any legal or other ties. Soon after their arrival the violence resumed, and the woman wanted the family to return to Europe. The husband confiscated the passports and all other documents belonging to his wife and his son, and threw away the family's return air ticket.

Moreover, he created false documents establishing 'legal' residency in Bora Bora, and used these to initiate court proceedings, claiming full custody of the child for himself. In a provisional decision, the local court ordered shared custody of the child, who now spends one week with the mother and one week with the father, and banned the child from leaving the territory of French Polynesia (the woman was basically not allowed to speak in court).

The mother, who has been deprived of almost all her human rights, refuses to leave her child behind. These two Hungarian/EU citizens are thus being held as hostages in a French overseas territory, and their lives are at risk. Both the protection of the legal rights of EU citizens within Union territory and the protection of women and children from family violence are priorities for the EU – at least in principle and on paper.

What can and will the EU do in this situation to protect the rights of actual EU citizens in an actual and real situation of deprivation of their rights?