

**Question for written answer P-004654/2013
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**
Rule 117
Olle Schmidt (ALDE)

Subject: VP/HR - Human trafficking in Sinai

Refugees from the Horn of Africa seeking safety often travel to Israel via Egypt. This means that they have to cross the Sinai Desert, which is a no man's land over which the Egyptian Government would seem to have no control.

The journey through the desert is facilitated by Bedouins, people smugglers, who exploit the vulnerability of these refugees. Women are raped, people are locked up for months on end in order to extort even more from them, and people are killed for their organs or just because it is possible.

Would the VP/HR consider setting up an action group with states involved in the various stages of the trafficking chain, including sources, transit and destination, in order to address this problem on a structural basis?

Can the European Union Special Representative for the Horn of Africa, Mr Alexander Rondos, or the Special Representative for the African Union, Mr Gary Quince, provide such an action group with technical assistance?