

**Priority question for written answer P-003057/2023/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Ursula von der Leyen's complicit silence on the war crimes committed against the people of Palestine

Last Friday 13 October, the President of the European Commission travelled to Israel to meet the Israeli President, Isaac Herzog, and Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. Standing next to them, she declared that 'how Israel responds will show that it is a democracy.' Israel's response was the killing of over 2 500 people and the injuring of a further 9 000 in less than a week. Israel has imposed a blockade, cutting off essential supplies and forcing people from their homes. Some NGOs report that Israel has even unleashed white phosphorous, the use of which has been condemned under international humanitarian law. This is a clear example of collective punishment of a civilian population, which Herzog himself declared a military objective in order to justify shelling in the Gaza Strip. This constitutes a war crime in the same vein as the attack on strategic civil infrastructure.

In light of this:

1. With what authority and mandate did the President of the Commission make the journey to Israel when the Council had not yet agreed on its position?
2. Does Ursula von der Leyen's refusal to criticise the war crimes being committed by Israel represent the collective position of the Commission on this matter?

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