

**Priority question for written answer P-001060/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Elena Yoncheva (S&D)

Subject: Urgent need to take action for the liberation of European citizens captured by Yemen's Houthis

With grave concern, I write to enquire about the welfare and safety of three EU citizens, two Bulgarian and one Romanian, captured during the hijacking of the 'Galaxy Leader' ship in the Red Sea by Yemen's Houthis on 19 November 2023. As this incident continues to unfold, it is crucial to understand the measures being taken by the Commission and Member States and the planned course of action to secure the safe release of those being held captive.

As a governing body tasked with upholding the rights and security of EU citizens, I implore the Commission to prioritise diplomatic efforts and engage in swift actions to ensure that the EU is upholding and promoting its values and interests for the protection of its citizens.

1. What specific measures have the European External Action Service taken to address the situation of the EU citizens who were captured in November 2023?
2. How is the European External Action Service coordinating with international partners to ensure the safe liberation of the EU citizens being held captive by the Houthis?
3. Have the Bulgarian authorities requested that the Commission support their efforts to engage with the relevant authorities and stakeholders to facilitate negotiations for the release of those being held captive?

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