**Julie Ward (S&D).** – Mr President, I’ve heard directly from NGOs working on the ground with refugees and migrants in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is no organisation, infrastructure or adequate support, and desperate people, including many children, are living in appalling conditions, sleeping on the ground in abandoned places or wherever they can find a place to lie down. Almost everyone has scabies and there are no available treatments. Several people have died of blood poisoning because various infections were not treated; many drown in the river trying to reach Croatia; others are beaten, tortured and robbed by Croatian police and sent back to Bosnia. They’ve been strangled, tortured with electricity, and burnt with hot metal rods by Croatian police also.

Right-wing politicians portray these desperate people as violent addicts, criminals, rapists and thieves, carriers of diseases – the language that is used when talking about refugees is hate speech.

Meanwhile, the work of many volunteers has been forbidden or criminalised. Bosnia and Herzegovina became an unlikely gatekeeper of the European Union and Croatia forgot its responsibility as a Member State to uphold human rights.