

**Question for written answer E-002807/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Protection of European maritime interests in the Red Sea

The explosive situation in the Middle East, Iran's open support of the Houthis and the sharp increase in Houthi attacks targeting merchant shipping serving European interests in the Red Sea are now seriously undermining the safety of crews, the economic viability of these shipping companies and the proper functioning of world trade, in which the Greek Navy, which is disproportionately targeted, plays a crucial role.

Given the strategic importance of European maritime transport for the EU economy and international trade:

1. How does the Commission intend to enhance the protection of vessels and their crews in the Red Sea area?
2. How does the Commission intend to step up its diplomatic efforts to mitigate the crisis and ensure free and safe shipping in this area?
3. What initiatives does the Commission intend to take to offer economic and operational support to the European maritime sector so that it can maintain its competitiveness in these difficult circumstances?

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