

**Question for written answer E-005443/2014  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Carlo Fidanza (PPE)**

Subject: Ebola virus alert

An epidemic caused by Ebola virus has been under way in Guinea since last February, where it has led to at least 108 deaths to date. Outbreaks have also been recorded in neighbouring countries, with a total of 19 deaths across Liberia and Sierra Leone. So far 203 cases have been recorded. The virus causes haemorrhagic fever which usually proves fatal. This is West Africa's first Ebola epidemic in 20 years. Health authorities at world as well as local levels are therefore watching the situation closely, to prevent the virus spreading elsewhere.

By circular dated 4 April, the Italian Health Ministry announced the start of checks and monitoring at international points of entry to Italy. The circular was sent to the Italian civil aviation authority, the Foreign Ministry, all regions and the Italian Red Cross. For the first time since 1970, the alert was also forwarded to the Ministry of Defence.

The procedures mobilised by the Health Ministry involve checks on both legal and illegal entrants into Italy and a monitoring role assigned to the Foreign Ministry.

The situation is causing particular concern and alarm in Italy where clandestine landings, of immigrants and refugees of African origin, are a constant occurrence on the island of Lampedusa. The fear is that the infection will arrive via this uncontrolled clandestine immigration, as Italy is Europe's Mediterranean gateway and the first port of call for clandestine immigrants and refugees.

1. Is the Commission aware of this situation?
2. What measures does it intend to take to help Italy manage this potential danger which could affect all the Member States?