

**Question for written answer P-006251/2017
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 130

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Subject: VP/HR - Support for Sicilian fishermen awarded the European Citizen's Prize 2017

The situation in the Strait of Sicily has been extremely serious for some time now. Fishing vessels are being seized in international waters and fishermen shot at.

The frequency of the incidents involving fishermen shows that there remains a serious underlying threat to their security.

At our proposal, the Sicilian fishermen of Mazara del Vallo were awarded the European Citizens' Prize 2017 in recognition of the fact that what they do on a daily basis in rescuing migrants is a perfect manifestation of fundamental EU values.

In the light of the above, does the Commission not think that the attacks by nationals of countries outside the EU could be viewed as outright 'acts of aggression' against European citizens?

Does it not consider that continuing to disregard this state of affairs, despite numerous reports and questions, is depriving those fishermen of their right to security and jeopardising their safety, and is a denial of the values and the recognition that Europe itself has attributed to them?

Will it not open a dialogue with Member States and their neighbours across the Mediterranean at the earliest opportunity to negotiate solid agreements on protecting the rights and safety of European fishermen?