Question for written answer P-003530/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Refusal to allow Aquarius rescue ship to dock in Malta and Italy

Question P-004488/2017 of 3 July 2017 warned that migrants would not be allowed to disembark at Italian ports, but that is exactly what happened on 10 June 2018 to the ship *Aquarius*, when it has 629 rescued people on board. It ended up docking in Valencia after Spain's socialist Government intervened.

It is impossible to keep redirecting such boats to ports thousands of nautical miles from where they are operating, and the EU and other Member States should show their solidarity towards the Member States closest to the routes most followed by migrants.

Malta is claiming that the vessel did not fall under its jurisdiction because it did not coordinate the rescue operation, and Italy believes that when it coordinates rescue operations, it can instruct the vessel to go to the nearest safe port, even if that port turns out to be in another country.

The Member States are responsible for external border management and a situation of that kind could come about again. Therefore, we must urgently establish who is responsible under international and European law and following seafaring customs for receiving vessels containing migrants.

In the Commission's view, how should the closest safe port be determined in such situations?