

**Question for written answer E-003186/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Petra Steger (PfE)

Subject: Chinese laser attack on German reconnaissance aircraft taking part in EU-led ASPIDES operation

On 2 July 2025, while taking part in the EU-led ASPIDES operation in the Red Sea, a German reconnaissance aircraft was blinded without reason or warning by a military laser from a Chinese naval vessel. The mission had to be aborted and an emergency landing made in Djibouti. This highly charged incident raises alarms over the significant risk of escalation in terms of political security associated with EU-led military operations abroad.

Militarily neutral Member States such as Austria are increasingly wondering whether the EU's security policy strategy does not already de facto imply shared responsibility or political involvement. Furthermore, the Commission has yet to independently inform the public about the incident, which raises serious doubts about transparency and political accountability in EU-led military operations abroad.

1. What information does the Commission have about the laser attack, and when does it intend to disclose it to the public?
2. What political and diplomatic consequences has it imposed on China?
3. In the light of this incident, what is its assessment of the international and democratic legitimacy of the EU-led ASPIDES operation, and what is its response to the growing concerns about neutral Member States, such as Austria, increasingly being drawn into geopolitical conflicts?

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