

**Priority question for written answer P-001016/2026/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Shipowners forcing seafarers to sail through high-risk conflict zones

Serious complaints by seafarers' unions reveal that shipowners have been putting pressure on seafarers to sign, supposedly 'voluntarily', risk acceptance statements before ships enter conflict zones, shifting responsibility to them in the event of injury or death.

As the US-Israel imperialist attack on the Iranian people unfolds, shipowners are making a fortune from astronomical freight rates.

The fact that shipowners are putting a price on human life in such a cynical manner is down to the policy of the EU and national governments – which is also supporting shipowners' interests through the EU's Operation Aspides in the Red Sea – and Nea Dimokratia's support to the US, the EU and Israel.

What is the Commission's position on the urgent calls for:

1. an end to seafarers being exposed in any way to major risks, by declaring the Red Sea and the Gulf a war zone and by obliging shipowners to assume all responsibility and costs for the immediate safe repatriation of seafarers, and for shipowners to stop the unacceptable act of forcing seafarers to sign 'risk acceptance declarations'?
2. an immediate end to the EU's Operation Aspides, which is strengthening military presence in the region, and for the return of all frigates and, more generally, military forces from the Middle East and the Gulf?

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