

(English version)

Question for written answer E-004590/25
to the Commission
Nacho Sánchez Amor (S&D)
(18 November 2025)

Subject: The United States' 'bully' tactics at the International Maritime Organisation meeting, and their effect on EU foreign policy

In October 2025, the International Maritime Organisation postponed a vote on its Net-Zero Framework, aimed at setting a global carbon price on international shipping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The framework had been provisionally agreed by a majority of countries in April 2025 and was expected to be made binding during the October 2025 vote.

Several media outlets reported that the United States, which is openly against this proposal, managed to influence the outcome of the vote via 'bully' tactics ⁽¹⁾, which included threats of retaliatory measures against states that supported the agreement, and intimidation and personal threats against the delegates present at the negotiations, among whom were EU military staff delegates. This approach was also advanced by the US Department of State in a press release prior to the vote ⁽²⁾.

Taking into account that:

- The Commission is finalising the implementation of the EU-US trade framework;
 - The EU emissions trading system is the EU equivalent of the Net-Zero Framework, and one of the key pieces of the EU Green Deal;
1. Can the Commission confirm that it has not been subjected to similar intimidation tactics during EU-US trade negotiations?
 2. Can the Commission confirm whether it was aware of the US pressure against EU military staff delegates, as an observer member of the International Maritime Organisation?
 3. Can the Commission elaborate on how it plans to counter similar situations in future negotiations on contentious files with the United States?

Supporter ⁽³⁾

Submitted: 18.11.2025

Answer given by Mr Šefčovič on behalf of the European Commission
(27 February 2026)

The Commission takes note of the media reports about alleged intimidation or personal threats during the meeting of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in October 2025.

The Commission is not aware of US pressure during the IMO negotiations directed at EU military staff.

The discussions between the EU and the US in the run up to the announcement of the EU-US political agreement on tariff and trade in July 2025 were conducted in a spirit of mutual respect and were devoid of any 'intimidation tactics'.

The Commission remains committed to working constructively with the US, while continuing to act firmly to defend the interests of the EU.

¹ <https://www.ft.com/content/4e0a9a30-b014-4745-afe5-c841e36b41da>.

² <https://www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2025/10/taking-action-to-defend-america-from-the-uns-first-global-carbon-tax-the-international-maritime-organisations-imo-net-zero-framework-nzf/>.

³ This question is supported by a Member other than the author: César Luena (S&D).