Question for written answer E-003061/2021

to the Commission

Rule 138

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Subject: Deployment of acoustic weapons at the border between Greece and Turkey

A number of reports across the media in the past week have described the acquisition by the Greek border police of Long Range Acoustic Devices (LRADs), generally known as sonic cannons, which it intends to deploy at the border with Turkey. The stated aim of the Greek border police is to prevent people on Turkish sovereign territory from progressing any further. To achieve this, LRADs produce a high-frequency acoustic signal which causes acute pain and lasting damage. Not even the use of earplugs or hands to cover the ears provides sufficient protection from damage to the eardrums. This was the finding of the organisation ‘Physicians for Humanity’ in a report dating back to 2016. The report also called for a moratorium on the use of all acoustic weapons, for this reason.

1. In the Commission’s view, what is the legal basis for the deployment of sonic cannons?

2. In the Commission’s view, how can the human rights obligation to provide access to an asylum procedure be fulfilled if asylum seekers are prevented from making an application for asylum by means of weapons?

3. How will it be ensured that no violations of EU law are financed and that any such breaches of the law are acted upon?