

9 April 2020

Commissioner **Kyriakides**  
European Commission  
B-1049 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Commissioner

### **Export of live cattle to Libya**

EU Member States continue to export live cattle to Libya even though the country is war-torn. The situation in Libya has deteriorated markedly in recent weeks and the country is fractured by civil war. In January High Representative Josep Borrell said that the situation in Libya “is worsening day by day”. Libya is without any effective authorities.

In this circumstance we are disappointed that DG Sante wrote a letter on 4 March to an animal welfare organisation saying: *“In your email, you question if it is ethically acceptable to export live animals to Libya, a country under increased military activity. The Commission is not considering to ban export of live animals to third countries, even if they are under armed conflict.”*

We urge you to rethink DG Sante’s position on this as it does not seem to reflect your own commitment to improving animal welfare.

It is worrying that Member States are prepared to send animals to Libya as it is hard to believe that the authorities will be able to ensure that slaughter is carried out in conformity with the OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) international standards on animal welfare at slaughter.

It has been too dangerous to film in slaughterhouses in Libya for many years but it is unlikely that slaughter practices are much different from those of neighbouring countries which result to serious and prolonged suffering for animals.

We believe that to send animals to a war-torn country with no effective authority that can ensure they are slaughtered in accordance with international standards on welfare at slaughter is in breach of Article 13 TFEU. This requires the EU and the Member States to pay “full regard to the welfare requirements of animals” in formulating and implementing agriculture and transport policy.

Moreover, sending cattle to Libya is inconsistent with the judgment of the Court of Justice in the *Zuchtvieh* case. Here the Court ruled that, in the case of the export of live animals to third countries, Council Regulation 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport continues to apply all the way through to the destination in the third country. It is most unlikely that the Court’s judgment can be respected in the case of exports to Libya.

In conclusion, we urge you to prohibit live animal exports to Libya as a matter of urgency and in the meantime to strongly discourage Member States from permitting live exports to Libya.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Klaus Buchner, MEP

Ms. Eleonora Evi, MEP

Mr. Francisco Guerreiro, MEP

Ms. Anja Hazekamp, MEP

Mr. Martin Hojsík, MEP

Ms. Tilly Metz, MEP

Ms. Maria Noichl, MEP

Ms. Sylwia Spurek, MEP

Mr. Michal Wiezik, MEP