

Ms. Stella Kyriakides
European Commission
Berlaymont
Rue de la Loi 200
1049 Bruxelles

Brussels, 25 June 2024

Re: Live animals shipment to the Middle East

Dear Commissioner,

The livestock vessel, *Shorthorn Express*, has been attacked by drones while carrying live animals from the EU to the port of Haifa. We believe the ship was carrying over 12,000 live sheep from Portugal. It seems that, despite the attack, the *Shorthorn Express* was able to continue to Haifa and unload the animals, and is now en route to Malta.

In light of this attack, **we urge you to suspend all shipments of live animals from the EU to ports in the eastern Mediterranean as long as hostilities in that region continue**. In our view it is completely unacceptable for EU cattle and sheep and the ship's crew to be put at risk of being killed or injured during attacks on livestock vessels that are carrying animals to a region where serious conflicts are continuing and may even spread.

Article 13 TFEU requires the EU, when formulating and implementing its policies on agriculture and transport, to pay "full regard to the welfare requirements of animals". Permitting continued transport of animals to a region where serious armed conflicts are underway would, we believe, be incompatible with Article 13.

In addition, Article 3 of Council Regulation 1/2005 on the protection of animals during transport provides: "No person shall transport animals or cause animals to be transported in a way likely to cause injury or undue suffering to them". Transporting animals to this region while hostilities continue raises issues under Article 3.

We do hope that you will agree that shipments to the eastern Mediterranean should be suspended until hostilities in that region have come to an end and we also hope you will agree that this tragedy shows once more that live exports should be banned as part of the new legislative proposal.

We urgently need a roadmap to facilitate a transition towards the export of meat and carcasses instead of live animals, ensuring both animal welfare and safety.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration, we very much look forward to your reply and we would be grateful for a meeting with you or your Cabinet to discuss this issue.

Yours faithfully,

Reineke Hameleers,
CEO, Eurogroup for Animals

Peter Stevenson,
Chief Policy Advisor, Compassion in World Farming

Gabriel Paun,
EU Director, Animals International

Glenys Oogjes,
CEO, Animals Australia

Caroline Rowley,
Director, Ethical farming Ireland