



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Crisis Preparedness in Food, Animals and Plants
The Director

Brussels
SANTE.G.3/MK/iv(2025) 13547207

Subject: Animal welfare crisis aboard the ship Spiridon II

Dear Petitioners,

Commissioner Várhelyi asked me to thank you for your letters received in November 2025 presenting a petition ⁽¹⁾ calling upon the European Commission to lead a coordinated action helping to solve the animal welfare crisis aboard the ship Spiridon II with 2,901 cattle on board.

The ship, which left Uruguay in September, was refused entry by the Turkish authorities, thus exposing the animals to a high risk to their welfare.

I would like to inform you that the European Union cannot intervene in trade relations or disputes between third countries. Furthermore, we are not aware of any EU Member State or EU operator involved in this case.

Both, Uruguay and Türkiye, are Members the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and committed to implement its international animal welfare standards including on transport by sea. WOAHA disposes with different mechanisms such as meditation and activating its networks of WOAHA Delegates, National Focal Points on animal welfare and or National Focal Points on long distance transport for Europe to which Türkiye is a member.

According to our information, the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) worked actively with everyone involved to solve this situation, and all animals from this vessel have been finally unloaded in Benghazi, Libya.

Thank you very much for your commitment to animal welfare.

Yours sincerely,

[e-signed]

Bernard Van Goethem

⁽¹⁾ Your e-mail refers to a "petition", which in the framework of EU Law is used for petitions addressed to the European Parliament pursuant to Article 227 TFEU. Your letter is dealt with by the Commission according to the rules for correspondence with citizens.