

Question for oral answer O-0000/2012

to the Commission and the Council

Rule 115

Eva Joly

on behalf of the Committee on Development

Subject: The Belo Monte dam project in Brazil

The construction of the Belo Monte dam, in the Amazon, raises serious concerns in relation to the rights of indigenous people living in the area. Indian tribes bitterly protest against the destruction of their livelihoods. State prosecutors have supported claims that rights of the indigenous populations in the area to be consulted have not been properly respected.

The issue has drawn attention at international level, with interventions *inter alia* by the Organisation of American States' Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and questions during the recently concluded Universal Periodic Review of Brazil's human rights record in the UN's Human Rights Council.

The Belo Monte project, together with some 30 other hydropower projects in the Amazon region, should in the future help ensure the electric energy supply to Brazil's growing population and economy. It is, however, also contributing to the deforestation and increasing exploitation of the Amazon region.

In a resolution on dam infrastructure in developing countries adopted on 27 September 2011, the European Parliament noted that the Belo Monte project will cause severe damage to the environment and displace indigenous people.

The High Representative/Vice President of the Commission Ms Ashton has described the construction of dams as a Brazilian domestic issue, but said that the situation of indigenous people and their rights is addressed in the EU-Brazil Human Rights Dialogue, that the EU prepared a contribution to the protection of forests in an area touching upon Belo Monte and that environment and climate change are at the core of the EU-Brazil Strategic Partnership.

Against this background, and also given the fact that there is some involvement of EU business (in particular the Alstom engineering company) in the Belo Monte project, could the Council and the Commission:

- specify how Belo Monte and the wider issue of hydroelectric power projects in the Amazon region is addressed in political and human rights dialogues with Brazil and what reactions are received?

- tell how they assess the possible environmental impact at global level of ongoing developments in the Amazon region and the possibilities for the EU to play a more active role in efforts to limit negative impacts and encourage and facilitate sustainable development?

Tabled: 8.10.2012

Forwarded: 9.10.2012

Deadline for reply: