



19.04.2010

## **QUESTION TO THE COMMISSION**

**(004/2010)**

**Meeting of 26-27 April 2010**

### **1. Question tabled by Barbara Lochbihler**

#### *The situation of Roma in Kosovo:*

Roma are the most vulnerable minority in Kosovo. Anti-gypsy sentiment and xenophobia remain widespread and today the Roma are the ethnic group suffering the highest levels of poverty and social exclusion.

How does the Commission in general evaluate the situation of Roma in Kosovo?

What is the particular situation Roma who are deported from EU member states to Kosovo?

Do Roma children in Kosovo have the same educational opportunities as their peers?

How does the Commission evaluate the substantial gap between strategies and action plans and their actual implementation?

### **2. Question tabled by Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio**

The Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, has recently commented that Cuban President, Raul Castro, and his brother, Former President Fidel Castro, have blocked steps with the United States which were to improve relations with the Caribbean island.

Also, the US position on the relations between the Castro regime and different terrorist groups and the political consequences it might cause, is a valuable reference and signal that should not be ignored. Washington takes the assumption that members of the terrorist group ETA are currently present in CUBA very seriously. Spanish citizens are very preoccupied of the possible presence of ETA members in Cuba.

Has the European Commission been informed about these accusations? And what is the position of the Commission, knowing that Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miguel Angel Moratinos, under the Spanish Presidency, wants to improve the relations between the EU and Cuba?

### **3. Question tabled by Cristian Dan Preda**

What is the Commission's assessment about the protection of human rights during recent elections in Sudan, as well as in the pre- elections and post-elections context ?

### **4. Question tabled by Frieda Brepoels**

As has been reported The European Parliament has intervened several times to obtain the release of human rights defenders, parliamentarians and other politicians detained in Syrian prisons. For example, this Parliament on 17 September 2009 asked for the immediate release of all prisoners of conscience, human rights defenders and peace activists, such as Muhannad al-Hassani, Michel Kilo Mahmoud Issa, Anwar al-Bunni and Kamal Labwani.

I could also refer to the imprisonment, since October 2009, of the prominent 79-year old human rights lawyer Haitham al-Maleh. He has been charged in military court with weakening national sentiment. His health condition is weakening, mainly because the bad conditions of captivity (special medicines blocked, no personal visit from doctor,...).

What has the Commission done since the adoption of the September 2009 Resolution of the EP?

What has been the Commission's response to these imprisonments and violation of human rights in Syria?

### **5. Question tabled by Traian Ungureanu**

On 7 April 2010, the so-called authorities of the unrecognized breakaway region of Transnistria in the Republic of Moldova arrested journalist Ernest Vardanean under charges of alleged high treason and espionage in favour of Moldova. The arrest warrant was extended for another 60 days, while the journalist faces the risk of 12 to 20 years in prison. Lawyer Ion Manole, chairman of the human rights organization Promo-Lex, declared recently that nobody was aware of the journalist's detention conditions, not even his family.

While the so-called Transnistrian authorities are not recognized internationally and are widely criticized by the international community for grave human rights violations, the case of Ernest Vardanean is extremely worrying and raises serious concern of the international community.

What measures does the Commission and EU Head of Delegation in the Republic of Moldova intend to undertake in order to achieve the immediate release of journalist Ernest Vardanean in accordance with international standards of human rights protection?

Until the release is obtained, does the Commission intend to raise the issue of his detention conditions, demand clear information on them and ensure their fairness, as well as the safety of the members of Vardanean family?