

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3321/01

by Stavros Xarchakos (PPE-DE) and Christos Zacharakis (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Targeted demolition of buildings belonging to Greeks in Albania

According to complaints by the Greek community of Cheimarra on 22 November 2001 the selective demolition of buildings and homes belonging to members of the internationally recognised Greek ethnic minority of southern Albania is scheduled to commence. The buildings concerned are properties returned to their rightful owners by the local authorities immediately following the fall of Hoxha's communist regime and include houses, taverns, cafes and offices belonging to Greek organisations together with a Greek language tuition centre.

The new mayor of Cheimarra, who belongs to the Socialist party, sent fifteen selective letters of notification of demolition to members of the Greek ethnic minority on the grounds that the buildings concerned, which have been standing for many years and were returned to their rightful owners following revocation of the provisions confiscating them decreed by the previous Communist regime were unauthorised.

What view does the Commission take of this? Are such racist tactics by the Albanian authorities against ethnic Greeks in Albania consistent with officially accepted principles in the EU Member States? What immediate measures can be taken to halt the measures thus decided and end the persecution by the Albania of members of the ethnic Greek minority which is recognised not only internationally but also by Albania itself?