

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0335/03
by Maria Sanders-ten Holte (ELDR)
to the Commission

Subject: A new generation of mercenaries

Although the system of old-style mercenaries is not yet entirely a thing of the past, a new type of mercenary is coming into existence in conflicts in Africa. The soldiers concerned provide military services, even including peace-keeping and monitoring of the enforcement of cease-fires. The most important development here is the establishment of small military groups which offer their services to governments and commercial enterprises.

1. Does the Commission have any information about the activities of foreign soldiers in conflicts in Africa?
2. Can the Commission, in particular, indicate the role which such soldiers are playing in border wars in West Africa?
3. To what extent is the EU taking account of this new phenomenon in its strategies for restoring peace and settling conflicts in Africa?