

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1229/03
by Freddy Blak (GUE/NGL)
to the Council

Subject: Enhanced legal cooperation

Following a visit to a Danish national who is imprisoned in Spain, I now realise that European legal cooperation leaves much to be desired. The person concerned has been in prison since 28 November 2001 accused of murder. On 14 January 2002, the accused's lawyer sent an international court order to the Spanish Ministry of Justice, to be forwarded in turn to the Danish Ministry of Justice, with a view to summoning a witness for questioning. More than a year later, this international court order has still not left the Spanish Ministry of Justice.

It is appalling that such sluggish procedures can delay and prolong legal cases. To date, no formal charge has yet been made against the accused.

Will the Council therefore say what initiatives it intends to take to enhance European cooperation in this field?