

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3084/03
by Koldo Gorostiaga Atxalandabaso (NI)
to the Commission

Subject: Sit-in of Basque political prisoners

In the Basque Country, an unquestionable political conflict exists because the Basque people are being denied their democratic rights. The outlawing of ideas and political projects has brought only greater confrontation and more suffering.

The community of almost 700 hundred Basque political prisoners have been holding a sit-in, in the prisons of the Spanish Kingdom and the French Republic, since 27 September in defence of their rights. They have rejected visits from friends and relatives. As a matter of fact, journeys are so long that visits are impossible, and 13 people have already died on the way to or from the prisons.

The Spanish Government ignores every call to put an end to these sufferings, and the Spanish courts do not dare to insist on the democratic principle of the separation of powers.

On 4 September 2003, the European Parliament adopted a Report on the situation as regards fundamental rights in the EU (2002) (A5-0281/2003), where much emphasis is given to the mobilisation of European capacity to put an end to these intolerable abuses of prisoners.

Can the Commission table a proposal to the European Parliament so that this issue may be tackled as a matter of urgency?

Would the Commission support the involvement of Basque prisoners in a bid to find a solution to the ongoing conflict in the Basque Country?