

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0148/04
by Cees Bremmer (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Human rights in Burma

Is the Commission aware of the very serious human rights abuses in Burma committed by the military junta since the most recent democratic elections in 1990? These abuses have involved the oppression of various ethnic groups, which have led to, among other things, the problem of Burmese refugees in north-east India (Christians from the Chin ethnic group), who fled the terror inflicted by the Burmese army, and to the problem of the Burmese Rohingya Muslim refugees in Bangladesh?

Does the Commission share the view that Burma has failed significantly to meet its obligations as a member of the UN and that it is the task of the international community, and of the European Community in particular, to bring this to Burma's attention?

Does the Commission share the view that the issue of human rights in Burma can be resolved only through a process of democratisation based on dialogue between the military junta, the democratic opposition and ethnic groups?

With regard to the above point, is the Commission prepared to contribute to the reinforcement of Burma's nascent civil society in, for example, the areas of healthcare, education and the environment, where needs are greatest due to a lack of funds and of organised initiatives?

Is the Commission also prepared to contribute to resolving the refugee question by calling on the Indian authorities not to put any more pressure on Burmese displaced persons in north-east India, and by facilitating the provision of humanitarian aid? Is the Commission further prepared to apply pressure on the Bangladeshi authorities and the UNHCR to ensure that Burmese Rohingya Muslim refugees in the recognised official refugee camps in southern Bangladesh are not forced to return and that unrecognised Rohingya Muslim refugees receive some kind of humanitarian aid?