

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0617/04
by Anna Karamanou (PSE)
to the Council

Subject: Decision by the Dutch parliament to expel thousands of immigrants

On 17 February 2004 the Dutch parliament adopted a government bill to expel some 26 000 immigrants and refugees who have been living in the country for years, including many young people born in the Netherlands. The bill also provides for new, more stringent conditions for granting asylum to immigrants, in line with the tough immigration policy pursued by the Dutch Government over the last few years. The majority of Dutch society, together with scores of non-governmental organisations, have declared their opposition to this inhumane and racist decision. The UN High Commission for Refugees has also expressed its opposition to the plan, since many immigrants in the Netherlands face serious problems, and there is no prospect of repatriating them safely to their countries of origin.

Will the Council say whether it considers that the specific measures to expel immigrants from the Netherlands by force are compatible with the 1951 Geneva Convention and the Tampere commitments to draw up an integrated European asylum and immigration policy with transparent rules based on European humanitarian values and respect for the dignity of the human person?