

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2589/04

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to the Council

Subject: Seizure of Indymedia's European sites

Indymedia is an independent information network which hosts a forum that is not subject to any central editorial censorship. However, on the pretext of the content of articles freely placed online, the FBI ordered the seizure of servers in the UK hosting many international sites, at the (joint) request of the Swiss and Italian Governments, after, among other things, a parliamentary question by an Italian MP from Alleanza Nazionale.

Does not the Council consider that this act constitutes an attack on the right to freedom of expression and to freedom of information, and that it is designed to intimidate a network that specialises in independent journalism, thereby violating the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union?

On what legal basis and with what justification did the national authorities take action, if this is in fact what happened, to request and to achieve these seizures through another Member State of the European Union?

Is it acceptable that the European media should become subject to the freedom-destroying standards of the Patriot Act?

To whom are FBI agents accountable when operating outside the territory of the USA?

Does the Council intend to seek clarifications from the relevant national European and US authorities?

What steps does the Council intend to take as a matter of urgency to cancel this seizure and to prevent a repetition of these violations of democratic European freedoms?