

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0996/06
by Albert Maat (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Persecution of the religious Sufi minority in Iran

On 13 February 2006 a peaceful demonstration by Sufi Muslims in the city of Qom in Iran was violently suppressed by the Iranian authorities. Around 1 200 Sufi Muslims were arrested and forced to sign declarations agreeing, among other things, that they would no longer take part in Sufi gatherings. At present around 170 Muslims are still being held in detention, where they are cut off from contact with the outside world and are being forced to sign false declarations. This situation is part of the wider persecution of, and discrimination, against, Sufi Muslims in Iran.

What information does the Commission have concerning the current situation of Sufi Muslims still being detained, and what steps can and will be taken by the Commission to put pressure on the Iranian Government to release these detainees?