

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1545/07

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to the Council

Subject: Voluntary associations

Declaration 38 attached to the Treaty of Amsterdam recognises the major contribution made by voluntary associations, and affirms the need to encourage such associations at European level.

Rotary International and Lions International are recognised by the UN, where they have a permanent representation.

These are non-profit associations which operate on the basis of their members' contributions.

They support the needy worldwide, building schools and hospitals, training and providing guide dogs and supplying audiobooks for the blind, organising thousands of long-distance adoptions, facilitating the twinning of clubs in different countries, and promoting young people's cultural exchanges.

According to press reports, in Imperia province (Italy) the local financial control office has got hold of the list of Rotary members, possibly for reasons connected with the tax register.

Can the Council:

1. examine the matter in detail in order to determine whether the reports referred to in the last paragraph above correspond to the truth;
2. establish the reasons behind the initiative mentioned, which, given the character of the associations concerned, cannot have fiscal objectives as such but could nonetheless entail implicit goals of a more disturbing nature;
3. make suitable representations in order to ensure that any such developments go no further and that this type of association is granted stronger and more constructive recognition at EU level, in line with the declaration referred to at the beginning of this question?