

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2032/07

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to the Commission

Subject: Application of provisions of the Koran to a woman by a German judge

A few days ago the press reported that a German judge had refused to speed up divorce proceedings for a North African woman who had requested that the case be expedited because she was suffering continual violence at the hands of her husband. The judge justified his refusal by saying that a sura in the Koran allows husbands to beat their wives. In the Daphne programme the European Union condemns any kind of violence against women and any discrimination between women of different origins living on European territory.

Can the Commission say whether:

1. it is aware of these events;
2. it does not consider it a grave matter that a judge in a Member State should refuse to apply the law of the country in favour of Koranic law, which he is moreover not entitled to interpret;
3. it does not also consider it appropriate to prevail upon the German government to require the judge to respect the law, to ascertain whether there are any other cases of this kind and to ensure respect for women's right not to be subjected to violence;
4. it does not consider that all the Member States should be called upon to respect Community legislation on human rights and the protection of women by asking the Council, whilst respecting national legislation, to make it absolutely clear that only the laws of the host country and Community law are applicable to non-European citizens on European territory?