

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5200/07

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to the Council

Subject: Article 204 of the Nicaraguan national Penal Code

On 18 September 2007, Amnesty International embarked on an awareness-raising campaign calling upon Nicaragua to decriminalise sodomy by repealing Article 204 of the country's Penal Code.

The EU itself holds a cooperation agreement with the Central American countries and is currently negotiating an Association Agreement with them, based on a human rights and democracy clause.

In the light of this clause, it is important that the European Union, being a fervent advocate of equality for all, support this campaign in the strongest terms possible. Article 204 is no doubt in violation of the ICCPR convention, to which Nicaragua is a party.

What is the European Council of Minister's position on the continued penalisation of sodomy? What actions are being undertaken by the Council to urge Nicaragua to follow suit and de-penalise same-sex sexual relations in the same way that her neighbouring countries have? Is the Council ready to urge the Commission to put this question on the agenda of the negotiations with the Central American countries as a serious problem for the advance of the relevant chapters of this agreement? Will the Council ensure this issue is raised continuously in the different diplomatic engagements we have with Nicaragua?