

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5105/08
by Marie-Noëlle Lienemann (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Placing conditions on the economic partnership with the Dominican Republic, with a view to protecting Haitian minorities' right to a decent life

On 16 December 2007 the European Union concluded an economic partnership agreement facilitating exports from the Dominican Republic to the Union, with goods entering the EU duty- and tax-free. Taxes may, however, continue to be levied for a period of seven years on imports of chemicals, capital goods and farm machinery, so as to provide budget revenue for the economic development of the Dominican Republic.

In this connection, attention must be drawn to alarming reports of serious racial and xenophobic discrimination against close to a million Haitian migrants and their Dominican-born descendants, whose fundamental rights are being trampled under foot in the Dominican Republic.

Accordingly, in return for the economic benefits the partnership agreement is expected to produce, the Commission should, in keeping with its stance on fundamental human rights, make all or part of the agreement subject to compliance with the relevant UN resolution, in order to ensure that the above persons are given humane treatment, decent pay and social rights.

How will the Commission seek to ensure that, as a matter of urgency, the Dominican Republic pursues a fair and humane immigration policy by applying laws that have already been enacted, regularising the situation of migrants by issuing them with identity papers enabling them to move freely and giving children born of parents of Haitian origin a nationality through the issue of a birth certificate, so as to enable them subsequently to enjoy the benefits of an education and access to healthcare, the courts and the labour market and resolutely to combat racist and discriminatory practices and attitudes?