

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0323/10  
by Konrad Szymański (ECR)  
to the Commission

Subject: Violation of religious freedoms of Catholics in Vietnam

In Dong Chiem, 70 km from the Vietnamese capital, a group of Catholics were brutally beaten by around 1000 police officers with dogs in a cemetery, around which police patrols were set up, cutting it off from the outside world. Seven people were detained, and their fate is still unknown. A journalist who attempted to reach the location was also attacked.

This is not an isolated case and is linked to the Catholic Church demands for the Vietnamese authorities to return property - including buildings and land - in the cemetery which belonged to the Catholic Church and was seized by the Vietnamese authorities during the 1950s and 1970s.

These incidents are an illustration of the violations of basic human rights occurring in Vietnam, in particular of the freedom of religious belief and affiliation and the right to own property, as guaranteed under Articles 17 and 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Does the Commission intend to take any action in this matter? In particular, does it intend to issue a note or make a public statement about the action it is taking in this case and other similar cases?

How will the Commission take this problem into account in its external relations policy regarding Vietnam?