

**Question for written answer E-014283/2013
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Sergio Berlato (PPE)

Subject: Abolition of customs duties for Pakistan and difficulties for the Italian textile sector

Following a proposal made by the European Commission, the European Parliament has approved the extension, from 1 January 2014 until the end of 2017, of the generalised system of preferences (GSP) for certain non-European countries, including Pakistan.

In practice, this measure will lead to an almost complete abolition of customs duties applied to textile products made in Pakistan and destined for the EU. As various trade associations and business representatives have pointed out, there is a real risk that this legislative measure will seriously harm employment in the European textile sector and Italy in particular. According to the most authoritative projections, 120 thousand jobs could be at risk across the Union and 40 thousand in Italy alone.

In light of this data, could the Commission answer the following questions:

1. Does it intend to apply the safeguard clause, which provides for the possibility of restoring customs duties for imported products that might cause major difficulties for European producers?
2. Does it believe, since the EU is the largest humanitarian aid donor in the world, that it should review its cooperation strategy with third countries, taking into account the major economic difficulties affecting many people in its regions?
3. Does it intend to safeguard its manufacturing industry by drawing up a list of sectors to protect, including the textile sector, in light of the clear disparity of regulations to which European producers are subject in comparison with their non-European competitors?