

ORAL QUESTION H-0669/03

for Question Time at the part-session in November 2003

pursuant to Rule 43 of the Rules of Procedure

by Christos Zacharakis

to the Council

Subject:           Contraventions of democratic process in the local elections in Albania

One week after the local elections in Albania, the Central Elections Commission has decided to repeat, on 16 November 2003, the elections in four constituencies (the municipalities of Piluri, Dhermi, Qeparo and southern Himara), citing irregularities during the election process of 12 October 2003, in spite of the fact that in two of the four cases the irregularities cited occurred after the finalisation and certification of the results.

As a result, there are legitimate concerns that these actions are intended to overturn the results of the local elections, which were 65% in favour of the Unity for Human Rights Party candidate as against the opposing candidate from the socialist party.

These concerns are heightened by the criminal prosecution of five Albanians of Greek origin who participated in the elections and are accused of issuing anti-Albanian propaganda and putting up foreign symbols. What steps does the Council intend to take, particularly within the framework of the Stability and Association Process between South East Europe and the European Union, to ensure that democratic process is complied with in the elections due to be held again in Himara on 16 November 2003?

Tabled: 04.11.2003

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