

ORAL QUESTION H-0442/08
for Question Time at the part-session in July 2008
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Robert Evans
to the Council

Subject: Sri Lanka

The Council will be aware of the escalating violence in Sri Lanka and the increasing likelihood of all-out civil war breaking out. Most recently, 11 people have died and more than 70 were injured in a bomb explosion on a packed commuter train, 2 more were killed in an explosion in the capital Colombo and the television reporter of Tamil origin Paranirupasingam Devakumar was fatally assaulted on his way home from work, the ninth journalist to be killed in Sri Lanka in the past two years.

The Council will also be aware of Sri Lanka's failed re-election bid to the UN Human Rights Council, a clear rejection by UN Members of a country which many consider to have abused its position on the Council not to promote human rights but rather to protect itself from international scrutiny based on widespread and documented evidence of human rights abuses perpetrated not only by the LTTE but also allegedly by the Government's own security forces.

In light of this, does the Council not agree that the EU should be seen to be at the forefront of efforts to finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the conflict? What approach is the Council considering taking to this end and how will this affect negotiations with Sri Lanka regarding entitlement to GSP plus status (Generalised System of Preferences)?

Tabled: 03.06.2008
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