

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0075/02

pursuant to Rule 42 of the Rules of Procedure

by Gianfranco Dell'Alba, Marco Pannella, Benedetto Della Vedova, Marco Cappato, Maurizio Turco, Emma Bonino, Olivier Dupuis, Generoso Andria, Roberta Angelilli, Roberto Bigliardo, Alima Boumediene-Thiery, Bob van den Bos, Renato Brunetta, Massimo Carraro, Francesco Fiori, Monica Frassoni, Fiorella Ghilardotti, Lousewies van der Laan, Mario Mauro, Domenico Mennitti, Francesco Musotto, Mauro Nobilia, Paolo Pastorelli, Frédérique Ries, José Salafranca Sánchez-Neyra, Ulla Sandbæk, Giacomo Santini, Luciana Sbarbati, Umberto Scapagnini, Mariotto Segni, Franz Turchi, Gianni Vattimo, Demetrio Volcic, Matti Wuori and Giuseppe Brienza  
to the Council

Subject: Community of Democracies

The second assembly of the 'Community of Democracies' will be held in Seoul, South Korea, from 9 to 12 November next. Those attending will include government and ministerial delegations from more than one hundred countries and a Forum of more than 300 NGOs, including the Transnational Radical Party and the organisation 'No Peace Without Justice'.

This event is particularly significant because it provides an opportunity for thinking about and boosting the instruments and procedures for promoting the rule of law, political democracy and respect for human rights in the world.

Foreign ministers from a number of countries have already said they will attend, including the US Secretary of State Colin Powell, whilst there has been no indication that the European Union is to take part as such or whether the individual governments of the Fifteen will participate or make a contribution.

Since the preparatory papers concerning the deliberations in Seoul are already being circulated, can the Council say:

1. how the European Union and the Council are preparing for this important event and at what ministerial level participation is planned;
2. what is or will be the European contribution to this initiative, since the objectives of the 'Community of Democracies' coincide with the commitments and principles solemnly declared on several occasions by the European Union in connection with the need to consolidate and promote democracy, the rule of law and human rights in the world on the basis of a joint effort by all the countries governed by democratic systems?

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Deadline for reply: 04.11.2002