

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0070/05

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by Sophia in 't Veld, Cecilia Malmström, Jelko Kacin, István Szent-Iványi, Chris Davies, Bill Newton Dunn, Baroness Sarah Ludford, Jules Maaten, Alexander Alvaro, Danutė Budreikaitė, Maria Carlshamre, Giusto Catania, Michael Cashman, Ona Juknevičienė, Mojca Drčar Murko, Karin Resetarits, Magda Kósáné Kovács, Anne Van Lancker, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert, Zita Gurmai, Anders Samuelsen, Proinsias De Rossa, Toine Manders, Edith Mastenbroek, Willem Schuth, Holger Krahmer, Claire Gibault, Véronique De Keyser, Alexander Stubb, Raúl Romeva i Rueda, Jan Wiersma, Claude Moraes, Thijs Berman, Jorgo Chatzimarkakis, Emine Bozkurt, Piia-Noora Kauppi and Antoine Duquesne
to the Commission

Subject: Dialogue with churches and non-confessional organisations

In connection with Declaration 11 to the Treaty of Amsterdam and Article 52 of the Constitution, the European Commission is said to have had two meetings, in November 2004 and in April 2005, with representatives of the Catholic and Protestant Churches, the Muslim Community, the Jewish community and the Church of Scientology. Neither the Humanist Federation nor any other non-religious organisation received an invitation to those meetings, despite the assurance by Mr Barroso (in his answer dated 8.2.2005 to Written Questions from Mrs De Keyser, P-3318/04, and Baroness Ludford, E-0307/05) that, 'during 2005, the Commission will establish procedures which match up to the spirit of the said article' (i.e.: Article I-52 of the Draft Constitution).

1. Can the European Commission provide the European Parliament with information about the meetings referred to above and indicate why the Humanist Federation was not invited to a meeting which took place in April, i.e. well after the answer given by Mr Barroso?
2. Can the European Commission guarantee that the implementation of the provisions on dialogue with churches, non-confessional and philosophical organisations will meet the following criteria:
 - the dialogue will be balanced and inclusive with regard to the participating organisations; no preferential relations will exist with any particular religion or movement; the dialogue will take place on the basis of an established list of participants, published on the website of the Commission;
 - the dialogue will be transparent; in other words, the meeting agenda and minutes will be published and the meetings will take place in public;
 - the dialogue will be put on the same footing as the dialogue with other sections of civil society.

Tabled: 13.05.2005

Forwarded: 18.05.2005

Deadline for reply: 25.05.2005