

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0024/08
pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure
by Gerardo Galeote and Luis de Grandes Pascual, on behalf of the PPE-DE Group
to the Commission

Subject: New Flame shipwreck and its consequences in Algeciras Bay

Since 12 August 2007, the Panamanian bulk carrier New Flame has been resting on the sea floor alongside the coast of Algeciras (Cádiz) and Gibraltar. In recent months, these coasts have been polluted by oil over more than one kilometre and in total, seven oil spills occurred between 28 August 2007 and 10 February 2008. On top of that, ongoing bunkering practices constantly take place in Algeciras Bay. These are extremely polluting and despite being prohibited, are carried out with the most absolute impunity.

Both bunkering practices as well as contamination caused by the oil spills of the New Flame are in breach of European environmental law in general and, Directive 2005/35/CE¹ of 7 September 2005 on ship-source pollution and on the introduction of penalties for infringements in particular.

1. In order to solve this situation, what concrete actions will the European Commission adopt? Is this situation currently being analysed within the European Commission?
2. As 'guardian of the Treaties', is the European Commission planning to launch the infringement procedure against one or several Member States whose active or passive behaviour might be in breach of the relevant European legislation?
3. Has the European Commission been informed by the competent national authorities of the situation of the New Flame?

Tabled: 05.03.2008

Forwarded: 07.03.2008

Deadline for reply: 14.03.2008

¹ OJ L 255, 30.9.2005, p. 11.