

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1028/00  
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to the Commission

Subject: Breach of Articles 2(4) and 6(2) of the Treaty of Amsterdam

The Austrian coalition Government has been the target of intense criticism since taking office last February. In a clear bid to underline EU public opinion, thousands of Europeans marched through the streets of Vienna, encouraged by global backing from all the EU institutions.

On 11 March 2000 at the Spanish-French border that separates the Basque people, Paris sent police forces to hinder the passage of Basque citizens going to a popular march in the northern town of Bayonne. The goal of this gathering was to denounce the dispersal of Basque political prisoners all over France and Spain and the violation of their rights and those of their relatives. The French Government, with full agreement from Madrid, applied Article 2 of the Schengen Convention that allows borders to be closed on an exceptional basis. Paradoxically, we note that, while the Vienna march was encouraged, that of Bayonne was forbidden.

1. Can the EU Member States inform the European citizens as to which human rights they are allowed to defend?
2. Can the Schengen provisions, as applied by the French Government totally contradict fundamental rights as guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights and the very principle of free movement of persons inside the EU?
3. Can the Basques live in an EU without their internal iron curtain?