

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0274/02  
by Gian Gobbo (NI)  
to the Commission

Subject: Repressive action against the Kurdish bilingualist movement in Turkey

Since the beginning of the year, a movement has emerged in Turkey, made up of students and parents calling for Kurdish to be taught in schools under the slogan 'bilingual education is possible'.

The Turkish police have arrested hundreds of Kurdish students who signed petitions in support of the right to be taught in their mother tongue. These students have apparently been prevented from having normal contacts with lawyers. Various human rights organisations have protested about these arbitrary arrests.

Would the Commission agree that these actions by the Turkish state contravene the 'Copenhagen principles', including respect for human rights and the rule of law, on which accession to the European Union is dependent?

If it has not already done so, would the Commission now be prepared to make representations to the Turkish authorities, calling for an end to the repressive action taken against the Kurdish minority in response to its legitimate demand for bilingual teaching?