

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2198/03

by Niall Andrews (UEN)

to the Commission

Subject: Safeguarding human rights in Mexico

Is the Commission aware of the ongoing human rights abuses in Mexico highlighted by Amnesty International? These include:

- the harassment, intimidation and murder of human rights defenders;
- the arrest and 'disappearance' of political opponents, campaigners for indigenous rights and members of indigenous communities;
- the murder of more than 200 women in Ciudad Juárez since 1993 and the failure of the Mexican authorities to conduct effective and appropriate investigations.

Is the Commission aware that, while Mexico has repeatedly committed itself to respecting human rights and to improving its human rights record, and having ratified the Inter-American Convention on Forced Disappearances of Persons, it refuses, nonetheless, to investigate cases of 'disappearances' which occurred before ratification of the Treaty?

Is the Commission also aware that cases involving the military continue to be heard by secret military tribunals only, thus undermining the credibility of the investigations?

Since the EU defines human rights and democracy as 'essential elements' in its relationship with countries outside the EU and for the strengthening of trade links between the EU and Mexico, will the Commission indicate what measures it intends to take to ensure that the Mexican Government fulfils its human rights commitments and obligations?