

WRITTEN QUESTION P-0442/04
by John Cushnahan (PPE-DE)
to the Council

Subject: Trade and Cooperation Agreement with Iran

I would like to draw the Council's attention to the conclusions of GAERC on 9 December 2003 concerning Iran, where the 'Council reiterated the EU's readiness to explore ways to develop wider political and economic cooperation with Iran... this can only be achieved through...improvements in the area of human rights'.

Does the Council therefore think that it would be appropriate to suspend any further cooperation with Iran in light of the Council of Guardians banning some 4 000 candidates from contesting the forthcoming parliamentary elections, including 82 deputies and the Deputy Speaker of the Parliament, Mr Khatami, pending the outcome of the appeal against this suspension which should be known on 10 February?

What measures will the Council take to ensure that the forthcoming elections in Iran are free and fair, and what will the repercussions be on the Trade and Cooperation Agreement if these elections are flawed?