

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1061/04
by Olivier Dupuis (NI)
to the Council

Subject: Family reunification in the European Union

In September 2003, the Swedish Consul in Washington assured Mr Ilyas Akhmadov, Foreign Minister in the government of President Maskhadov and author of the Peace Plan which proposes the establishment of a provisional UN Administration in Chechnya, that the competent authorities in Sweden would give a reply to his application concerning family reunification within three to four months. A few weeks earlier, having been granted the status of political refugees, Mr Akhmadov's wife and three children had arrived in Sweden. In January 2004, the Swedish consular authorities in the United States informed Mr Akhmadov that, despite previous statements, a reply to his application concerning family reunification could not be given before June or July 2004. Mr Ilyas Akhmadov has now been in the United States, without resident's status, for more than two years (since 2001). Since Mr Akhmadov's passport has now expired, he cannot actually leave the US. A situation of this nature manifestly does not facilitate Mr Akhmadov's political and diplomatic activities, which consist in promoting peace by seeking a political solution to the Russo-Chechen tragedy. Furthermore, this situation is having serious repercussions on Mr Akhmadov's family life: he has not seen his wife and two oldest children for more than two years now, and he has never been able to see his third child.

Is the Council aware of the situation of Mr Ilyas Akhmadov, Foreign Minister in Mr Maskhadov's government? Is it aware of the representations made by Mr Akhmadov so that he may profit from the normal measures relating to family reunification in a Member State of the Union? What, in the Council's view, are the reasons behind the Swedish authorities' lack of diligence in enabling Mr Akhmadov to profit from the measures relating to family reunification in Sweden? Given that the Union constantly claims that only a political solution will enable the Russo-Chechen tragedy to be brought to an end, does not the Council feel that the restrictions imposed on Mr Akhmadov, the senior Chechen diplomat - not to say the obstructionist measures taken against him - are most unlikely to make a positive contribution to the search for a political solution of that nature?