

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3397/04  
by Poul Rasmussen (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Turkey and human rights

'Egitim Sen is the biggest teachers' union in Turkey. It has 200 000 members, and it is now faced by the threat of being closed down because of its defence of the right of all individuals to education in their mother tongue.

The Attorney General of Ankara has brought an action against Egitim Sen, seeking the closing down of the teachers' union. The Attorney General's attempt to close Egitim Sen stems from the fact that, in its articles of association, the union defends the right to education in their mother tongue for all individuals and the right to develop their cultures in accordance with their basic human rights and freedoms.

The first court hearing took place on 13 July 2004, and the judge decided to put back the court hearing to 15 September. The judge then decided not to close down the union. According to the judge, the articles of association of Egitim Sen do not violate Turkish law, and the right to education in the mother tongue is in accordance with international human rights conventions. However, the Attorney General of Ankara decided to take the case to the Supreme Court to have the judge's decision revoked.

Members of the Supreme Court, 9th Law Section, met on 3 November and decided unanimously to revoke the decision on the Egitim Sen case handed down by the 2nd Labour Court. The case is scheduled to be heard in the Labour Court on 10 December 2004.

Is the Commission aware of the ongoing court case? Does the Commission agree that what is taking place here is not acceptable in the European Union? Would the Commission explain what measures are being taken to ensure that cases like this - where there is a manifest violation of international human rights - will not recur?'