

WRITTEN QUESTION P-5114/06
by Luís Queiró (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Violence against international aid workers in Mozambique and other regions of the world

On the morning of 6 November 2006 a Portuguese voluntary worker, Idalina Gomes (age 30) and a Jesuit priest were the victims of a brutal and cowardly murder carried out by an armed gang, which attacked the mission in which they were meeting, in the northern central part of Mozambique (Tete province).

This year alone, There have been five attacks on members of religious congregations in the province, following the various other murders carried out in previous years. There is therefore every reason to believe that these murders were a further attempt to destabilise and intimidate people devoting their efforts to social projects, many of them unique, aimed at improving the living conditions of deprived people in Mozambique.

The victims were members of a group of men and women who have devoted their lives – literally, in this particular case – to those who suffer most in this world, especially in Africa.

Development cooperation and aid is one of the areas of activity which does most credit to human nature, and the EU is a living example of this.

It is therefore important that the European Parliament should give due attention to these repeated murders, not only to express our solidarity and recognition, but also to emphasise that cooperation should also include a duty on the part of the governments of beneficiary countries to protect those providing assistance to their populations.

Has the Commission taken steps to ensure that there is a link between aid provision and security guarantees for aid workers, both under direct EU cooperation arrangements and as part of European cooperation efforts in general.

Following the series of attacks on aid workers working for religious institutions, will the Commission make representations to the Mozambican authorities?