

WRITTEN QUESTION P-2741/09  
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to the Commission

Subject: Economic safeguard measures for companies in great difficulties

The Dallas-based American petrochemical group *La Celanese* owns the *Acetex Chimie* factory site at Pardies. This factory manufactures acetic acid, used in paints, varnishes, plastics and even textile fibres and cigarette filters. It supplies the whole of the European market, from Germany to Portugal, with acetic acid, so much so that 90% of its production ends up on the European market.

Its deliveries within Europe account for 10% of traffic at the port of Bayonne and 70% of freight traffic at Artix Station.

The scandalous decision taken by the American directors of the multinational *La Celanese* to close the European site at Pardies, with the immediate loss of 354 jobs, as well as 2 000 spin-off jobs, has plunged 2 000 families into a precarious situation.

The workers have now mobilised and started industrial action in the form of a hunger strike to defend their livelihood as well as their family life and personal lives.

In view of the situation, can the Commission undertake an immediate study of the economic consequences that closure of the Pardies site will have for the whole of Europe?

Could the Commission envisage sending a representative to *La Celanese's* European site to hear both sides, i.e. management plus the trades union representatives and professional representatives of the workers on strike?

Would it be possible to open up a budget line to help soften the social consequences of the decision taken by the American authorities?

What decision does the Commission consider it can take immediately, in view of the symbolic aspect of this industrial conflict between Europe and the United States?