Question for oral answer O-0000/2013
to the Commission and to the Council
Rule 115
Eva Joly
on behalf of the Committee on Development
Barbara Lochbihler
on behalf of the Sub-committee on Human Rights

Subject: on Caste-based discrimination

Caste-based discrimination is recognized as one the most serious human rights problems in the world today and as a main cause of poverty and inequality in caste-based discrimination affected countries severely impeding the goals of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Affecting an estimated 260 million people worldwide, this form of discrimination breaches the most fundamental principles of international human rights law and leads to pervasive human rights violations, with high rates of impunity for violations committed against affected people. The manifestation and consequences of caste discrimination across continents and its cross-cutting and intersecting nature, especially affecting women, have been addressed by UN human rights bodies, in particular UN Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures, and by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Since 2007, the European Parliament has presented its concerns and recommendations to the EU in resolutions and called for EU action to address caste-based discrimination.

a) Do the Commission and the EEAS agree that a comprehensive EU policy and action plan to address caste-based discrimination should be defined in order to fight it?

b) How is the EU addressing the issue of caste-based discrimination including in development assistance programmes and projects, especially in caste-based discrimination affected countries including India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Yemen and Mauritania?

c) How do the Commission and the EEAS include this issue in its human rights dialogues with third countries and global initiatives?

d) What will the Commission and the EEAS do in order to fight the caste-based discrimination across continents as a cross-cutting issue, on par with other grounds of discrimination, through all its EU policies?

e) How will the EU address caste-based discrimination in cases of humanitarian crisis in caste-based discrimination affected countries in order to ensure the delivery of humanitarian aid to all marginalized groups?

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