temporary basis to allow the UNSG to reinforce the presence of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in Bunia. Answering to this call from the UNSC, the Council of the EU on 5 June 2003 decided to conduct a EU military operation in the DRC, named Artemis, in accordance with the mandate set out in UNSCR 1484(2003).

The mandate, limited geographically and in time, is thus designed to stabilise the situation in Bunia until the UNSG can deploy a reinforced UN presence to Bunia by mid-August 2003. The discussion of such a deployment of a reinforced MONUC, both in terms of manpower and mandate, is taking place in the UNSC for the moment with the active support of EU Member States sitting in the SC. MONUC’s mandate already covers the whole of the DRC.

(2004/C 51 E/226) WRITTEN QUESTION P-2137/03
by Marco Cappato (NI) to the Council
(19 June 2003)

Subject: Declaration by Umberto Bossi, the Italian Minister for Institutional Reform, on immigration policy

On 16 June 2003, Umberto Bossi, the Italian minister for Institutional Reform, publicly stated that ‘Illegal immigrants should be thrown out, full stop. Only people with employment contracts should be allowed in. Out with the rest. There comes a time when one has to use force. The navy and Guardia di Finanza should line up to defend our shores and use the gun.’ On the same occasion, Mr Bossi specified that ‘After the second or third warning, that should be it … bang. No more mincing words. Just shoot whoever they are. Otherwise we will never see the end of it.’

In view of the principles underlying the European common immigration and asylum policy, let alone the rights and fundamental freedoms laid down in Articles 6 and 7 of the Treaty on European Union, does the Council not feel, especially in consideration of Italy’s Presidency of the EU, that the Italian Government should be asked to clarify whether the statements on immigration policy made by one of its members represent that government’s position?

Reply
(13 October 2003)

It is not for the Council to express a view on public statements made by a member of the government of a Member State.

(2004/C 51 E/227) WRITTEN QUESTION P-2142/03
by Adriana Poli Bortone (UEN) to the Commission
(20 June 2003)

Subject: Accident at the Ilva Taranto plant (Italy)

A few days ago, two young men aged 24 and 27 died following an accident at the Ilva Taranto plant (Puglia, Italy).

Can the Commission state whether it intends to carry out an inquiry into the causes of this tragic event at this plant belonging to the Riva group, with a view, notably, to ascertaining what workplace safety measures were in place there?
Answer given by Mrs Diamantopoulou on behalf of the Commission

(7 July 2003)

The Commission ensures safety in the workplace by strictly monitoring the application of Community law.

In this case, the protection of health and safety of workers in general is covered by framework Directive 89/391/EEC (1) and its individual Directives.

The Directives must be transposed into national law by Member States and it is up to them to ensure that the national provisions transposing Community Directives on the health and safety of workers at work (cf. Article 4 of Directive 89/391/EEC) are adequately monitored.

It is therefore up to the Italian authorities responsible for monitoring national provisions transposing Community Directives on the health and safety of workers at work to ensure that these are applied effectively and correctly.

In this case, therefore, an investigation into the causes of the accident and any measures to be taken as a result are the responsibility of the national authorities, in particular the relevant labour inspectorate in the Apulia region, which is authorised to monitor the application of the legislation transposing the Community Directives in question.

The Commission will intervene in this case only if there is strong evidence that Community legislation has not been transposed into national law or has not been properly applied.

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WRITTEN QUESTION E-2145/03
by Reinhold Messner (Verts/ALE) to the Commission

(27 June 2003)

Subject: Preservation of the Tagliamento (Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Italy) as a wild river

In order to protect the town of Latisana, situated in the canalised lower reaches of the Tagliamento river, a 14 km² flood control reservoir is to be built in the middle course by removing around 30 million m³ of river gravel.

The Tagliamento forms the last expanse of wild river landscape in the whole of the Alpine region. For this reason, Italy applied for the section of the river in question to be registered as an FFH and Special Protection Area in accordance with EUDirectives 92/43/EWG (1) and 79/409/EWG (2).

If this flood protection project is carried out, the diverging waters (furcation), whose form changes with every flood, will be replaced with a single channel. This will obstruct the route along the river for wildlife. The large and previously shifting gravel deposits will grow in size (succession) and the bed of the Tagliamento will deepen. This will have far-reaching limnological and environmental consequences for the river meadows and the flora and fauna (e.g. more than 30 species of fish and 14 species of amphibian) that inhabit them, upstream and especially downstream from the reservoir. In addition to the permanent removal of gravel from the flood reservoir, downstream river works such as transverse structures will be necessary to counteract the deepening of the river and the consequent lowering of the ground-water level.

That flood protection is taken very seriously in Italy is to be welcomed. However, the devastating floods in Germany and large parts of Europe over the last few years have led to a change in thinking as far as flood protection is concerned. Constructions are now being avoided, with the focus on providing additional flood retention plains. On top of that, the EU's Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC (3)) commits all Member States to achieving 'good status' for all bodies of water. Moreover, Italy signed the internationally