

Would the Commission also set out what financial and technical assistance is being made available to the Algerian Government by the EU and any conditions which are placed on the delivery of this assistance? Would the Commission in particular explain why no humanitarian assistance is currently being provided to the Algerian people?

Answer given by Mr Marín on behalf of the Commission

(4 February 1998)

The Commission participated fully in the troika's mission to Algeria on 19 and 20 January 1998 and in the discussion on the situation in Algeria at the General Affairs Council meeting of 26 January. The Commission agrees with the Council's conclusions which answer the question put by the Honourable Member of which a copy is sent direct to the Honourable Member and the Secretariat General of the Parliament.

(98/C 187/215)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0047/98
by Mark Watts (PSE) to the Commission

(29 January 1998)

Subject: References on correspondence

Would the Commission agree to adopt the practice of quoting references on replies to correspondence? I am sure that this would greatly assist Members to locate the appropriate papers when a reply is received.

Answer given by Mr Santer on behalf of the Commission

(20 February 1998)

The Commission readily agrees that it is desirable for references to be quoted in reply to correspondence. The Commission's secretariat manual, and its dataprocessing arrangements, make provision for quoting references. Any inconvenience to the Honourable Member from a failure to quote a reference is regretted.

(98/C 187/216)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0074/98
by Stéphane Buffetaut (I-EDN) and Françoise Seillier (I-EDN) to the Council

(30 January 1998)

Subject: New Article 13 (ex 6A) of the Draft Treaty

The new Article 13 of the Draft Treaty on European Union lays down that 'the Council ... may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on ... sexual orientation'.

At a time when crimes of a sexual nature, particularly against children, and the sexual exploitation of human beings are justly condemned and action is being taken to combat them, particularly by the European Parliament in its recent resolutions (B4-0954, 0968, 0980 and 0990/97 of 20 November 1997; A4-0306/97 of 6 November 1997 and A4-0372/97 of 16 December 1997), does the Council consider it wise to create an imprecisely defined protected category which might be relied upon by persons who are suspected, for example, of paedophilia and who have been banned, at least temporarily, from all contact with children?

Since this same article provides for measures to combat discrimination based on sex, what were the Council's reasons for adding this new wording?

Does the Council propose to correct the imprecision of the term 'sexual orientation' in this context or to leave things as they are?