

The Council is satisfied that Member States are complying fully with Common Position 95/544/CFSP and Council Decision 97/820/CFSP on its implementation. The latter implies no change EU policy towards Nigeria and no relaxation of EU measures against it. Indeed, the Council's Conclusions of 28 November 1997 accompanying the Decision to renew Common Position 95/544/CFSP make it clear that if elections in Nigeria this year fail to permit a return to democracy and the rule of law before 1 October 1998, the EU will adopt measures in addition to those adopted in Common Position 95/544/CFSP.

(98/C 323/202)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-1396/98**

**by Leonie van Bladel (UPE) to the Council**

(6 May 1998)

*Subject:* Agreement for the return of EU nationals held in prison in Morocco

1. Can the Council explain why only one person is employed, one week per month, to defend the interests of almost 100 Netherlands prisoners in seven different Moroccan prisons throughout the country?
2. Is not one person for 100 prisoners, divided among 7 prisons in different parts of the country, far too few given that the UK Government (for example) has six full-time employees to defend the interests of only 35 prisoners?
3. Is the Council prepared to advise the Member States that they should enter negotiations without delay with the Moroccan Government with a view to concluding an agreement as soon as possible to permit prisoners from EU Member States to serve their sentences in their own countries?

(98/C 323/203)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-1397/98**

**by Leonie van Bladel (UPE) to the Council**

(6 May 1998)

*Subject:* Legal aid for EU prisoners in Morocco

1. Is the Council aware of the helpless situation in which suspects from countries of the European Union are placed when they are deprived of adequate legal aid, the assistance of professional interpreters, or adequate humanitarian aid in Morocco, a country where they have no notion of the language?
2. Does the Council realize the serious consequences which such a lack of professional support may have for EU nationals in court proceedings?
3. Is the Council aware that the prisoners in Morocco from EU Member States include a number of people aged over 70 who are in a state of cultural isolation and are suffering disproportionately as a result?
4. Is the Council aware that, following the visit in October 1997 of the Netherlands official delegation headed by Mr Damoiseaux, Head of the African Department of The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands Foreign Ministry has made no further contacts with the Moroccan Government to negotiate a treaty for the transfer of prisoners to The Netherlands to enable them complete their sentences in Netherlands prisons?
5. Why has there been no response to the Moroccan Government's offer, made in October 1997, to negotiate with the Netherlands Government on a treaty to enable Netherlands citizens to serve their sentences in the Netherlands, in their own cultural surroundings? This question is particularly pertinent since the Moroccan Government has already signed similar treaties with France, the UK, Spain, Portugal, Malta and Belgium among others. In 1997, within half a year, the Moroccan Government negotiated its treaty with the Belgian Government, and signed the final agreement with Belgium. Why should the completion of a similar treaty between The Netherlands and Morocco take longer than this?