

Answer given by Mr Marín on behalf of the Commission

(29 October 1998)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question No 2191/98 by Mr Ford ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 13, 18.1.1999, p. 152.

(1999/C 96/233)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3089/98**by Nikitas Kaklamanis (UPE) to the Commission**

(16 October 1998)

Subject: Turkish military blockade of Orthodox Monastery

The Orthodox Monastery of Mar Gabriel in Turkey is one of the most ancient in the world, being over 1 600 years old. The Orthodox faith and the Aramaic language have been taught there down to the present day and it is the spiritual home of three million Syrian Orthodox Christians. Over the last few months major American newspapers (such as the Los Angeles Times, on 21 August 1998) have reported that the Islamist regional governor of the region, Fikret Güven, has been attempting by various stratagems to put an end to the teaching of the 30 students at this monastery.

Having implemented Turkey's infamous racist law banning non-Turkish citizens from being ordained, the Turkish authorities are now seeking completely to deprive the monastery of teachers of the Christian faith. The Turkish army has recently set up in the village of Haberli next to the monastery a checkpoint (which is guarded by tanks) where the names of all the faithful wishing to visit the monastery are recorded.

Will the Commission give its views on this matter and say how it intends to react, since it is now clear that Turkey is emboldened by the inertia shown by the EU whenever the rights of the non-Muslim minorities remaining on Turkish territory are violated and takes even harsher measures to terrorize and persecute them?

Answer given by Mr van den Broek on behalf of the Commission

(10 November 1998)

The Commission would refer the Honourable Member to its answer to Written Question E-2159/98 by Mrs Daskalaki ⁽¹⁾.

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 31, 5.2.1999, p. 128.

(1999/C 96/234)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3092/98**by Laura González Álvarez (GUE/NGL) and Pedro Marset Campos (GUE/NGL) to the Commission**

(16 October 1998)

Subject: Delay in the payment of funds under the Leader I programme

The rural development centre 'La Montaña' was set up in the municipality of Cocentaina (Alicante, Spain) and has played an active part in the implementation of the Leader I programme.

It has acted as an intermediary in attracting a range of subsidies for projects which have already been concluded in neighbouring rural areas. Nevertheless, despite the time which has elapsed since the granting of subsidies by 'La Montaña' in 1994 and the conclusion of the projects for which grants were awarded, the beneficiaries have still not received the full amount of the subsidies.

According to the explanation given by 'La Montaña' to the beneficiaries, the reason for the delay is that the full amount due to them from the European Union has not yet been transferred.