

**Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission**

(29 January 2001)

The Honourable Member is asked to refer to the additional answer to his Written Question E-0951/00 <sup>(1)</sup>.

<sup>(1)</sup> See page 3.

(2001/C 174 E/144)

**WRITTEN QUESTION P-3784/00****by Heidi Hautala (Verts/ALE) to the Council**

(29 November 2000)

*Subject:* Secret protocol to the St Malo Declaration

At the St Malo Summit of 3 and 4 December 1998, the French and British Governments issued a joint Declaration on European defence. According to the Declaration, the EU 'must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and a readiness to do so, in order to respond to military crises'. At the same time, the Declaration said that collective security was a matter for NATO and that NATO had a predominant role in the territorial defence of Europe.

According to a newspaper article which appeared in the Dutch newspaper NRC Handelsblad on 8 March 2000, there was allegedly a secret protocol attached to the Declaration, which laid down that the European Parliament should never be involved in the shaping of the future European Security and Defence Policy.

1. Are the Council and its Secretary-General aware of the existence of any such protocol to the St Malo Declaration?
2. Will the Member States, the European Commission and the European Parliament be informed about the contents of the protocol?

**Reply**

(12 March 2001)

1. The Franco-British Declaration on European defence to which the Honourable Member refers was adopted by the Heads of State or Government of France and the United Kingdom at the bilateral Summit held in St Malo on 3 and 4 December 1998.
2. The European Council met on 11 and 12 December 1998 in Vienna. On that occasion it welcomed the Franco-British Declaration made at St Malo.
3. The Council does not know of any secret protocol attached to the Franco-British Declaration on European defence and stating that the European Parliament should never be involved in the establishment of the future European Security and Defence Policy.
4. The European Council has on several occasions recalled that the development of the Common European Security and Defence Policy is an integral part of the strengthening of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, on which the Parliament is kept regularly informed under Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union.