

Strategy and takes place on a regular basis between the Commission Delegation and Member State Embassies in Beijing. With respect to legal programmes in particular, the EU-China Legal and Judicial Programme focuses on a general introduction to European law and legal systems, including administrative, commercial and criminal law. Bilateral assistance programmes between Member States and China are more suited to in-depth practical studies of their respective legal systems.

3. The Commission Delegation in Beijing is responsible for the implementation of projects in the context of the China Country Strategy. Concerning the two above mentioned new programme proposals provide for the National Indicative Programme, the structure and modalities for implementation are still to be defined. As to the EU-China Legal and Judicial Cooperation programme, day-to-day management has been entrusted to the British Council. More detailed information on the status of project implementation is available on the Delegation's website ⁽¹⁾.

4. The projects mentioned above are, in general, proceeding in a satisfactory manner, but final evaluations are not yet available. Programmes envisaged under the China Country Strategy for 2003–2006 have not yet been launched but will be subject to close monitoring and evaluation by the Commission.

⁽¹⁾ http://www.delchn.cec.eu.int/en/Co-operation/Project_Fiches.htm.

(2003/C 52 E/089)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1565/02

by **Maurizio Turco (NI)** to the Commission

(3 June 2002)

Subject: Syria

In his answer to Question P-0634/02 ⁽¹⁾, Mr Patten states, among other things, that 'it is the Commission's firm belief that a dialogue on human rights will be more effective when conducted in the framework of a binding Association Agreement'. He also states the following: 'a future European Union-Syria Association Agreement will refer to human rights as an essential element in European Union-Syrian relations and it will be designed to foster common objectives expressed in the Barcelona Declaration ⁽²⁾, such as developing the rule of law and democracy, respect for human rights, free trade and sustainable development. The Commission will stress issues of reform in the MEDA cooperation programme.'

Does the Commission consider that it can remain optimistic about the necessary democratisation of Syria in the light of what has emerged, following the accident which occurred on 24 March 2002 in Homs, regarding the close technical and military cooperation between the Syrian and Iraqi governments in building missiles with ranges of more than 500 km?

More generally, is the Commission not concerned at the fact that a country which is now a member of the UN Security Council, thanks notably to the key support provided by the EU and its Member States, can violate the UN resolutions on Iraq in such a shameless manner?

Lastly, will the Commission indicate how far it intends to go in its optimistic and 'positive' policy vis-à-vis regimes which not only treat their own people in a totalitarian and repressive manner, but also constitute such an obvious threat to international security and stability that they appear at the top of the black lists of all international organisations?

⁽¹⁾ OJ C 277 E, 14.11.2002, p. 69.

⁽²⁾ Adopted at the Euro-Mediterranean Conference (27 and 28 November 1995).

Answer given by Mr Patten on behalf of the Commission

(11 July 2002)

The Commission is aware of press reports regarding an explosion at the end of April 2002, in a Syrian arms factory located near Homs. The same press reports quote Western intelligence services stating that the weapons complex in question was not a missile facility.

The Commission would like to suggest that the question regarding Syria's membership in the Security Council be redirected to the Council.

The Commission reiterates that a dialogue on human rights is an effective tool to work for the implementation of the objectives laid down in the Barcelona Declaration (adopted on 27 and 28 November 1995). In this respect the Commission would like to refer to the latest round of association negotiations with Syria where substantial progress was made on the political chapter; in that context, the Commission took the opportunity of again clarifying the Union's approach to human rights issues and the central role they play in the Association Agreement.

(2003/C 52 E/090)

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1568/02

by Lucio Manisco (GUE/NGL) to the Council

(28 May 2002)

Subject: The EU and the risk of war between India and Pakistan

The extremely serious developments of recent days would appear to point towards the possibility of an all-out war between India and Pakistan, which would have a disastrous effect on the entire region given that both countries have nuclear weapons. Would the Council not agree that it should take urgent diplomatic action, using all the means at its disposal, including a mission by High Representative Javier Solana, to avert such a tragedy?

(2003/C 52 E/091)

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1641/02

by Emmanouil Bakopoulos (GUE/NGL) to the Council

(3 June 2002)

Subject: Deterioration of Indo-Pakistani relations

In view of the recent deterioration in Indo-Pakistani relations, which could pose a significant threat to the people of the region and to the region's political and strategic stability in particular, will the Council, through the High Representative for the CFSP, take the lead in attempting to defuse the tension and re-establish constructive dialogue between the two countries?

**Joint answer
to Written Questions P-1568/02 and P-1641/02**

(5 November 2002)

1. The Council shares the Honourable MEPs' preoccupation over the state of Indo-Pakistani relations, and in particular over the continuing military stand-off at the Line of Control (LoC) over the past few months. The Council also agrees that an all-out war between the two countries would have disastrous effects on the entire region and beyond.

2. The European Council in Seville on 21 and 22 June 2002 discussed the tensions between India and Pakistan and issued a declaration, calling on Pakistan to take further concrete action to stop infiltration across the Line of Control and to prevent terrorist groups from operating from territory under its control. The European Council encouraged India to be ready to respond with further de-escalatory steps, and