

Reply

(30 September 2002)

1. The Council has followed closely the evolution of the political and social events that led to the violence on 11 April and the breach in the constitutional situation in Venezuela.
2. On Friday 12 April, Spain, as Presidency of the Council of the European Union, issued a declaration on the situation in Venezuela. This initiative was taken in line with Article 18 of the Treaty on European Union which states, *inter alia*, that 'The Presidency shall represent the Union in matters coming within the common foreign and security policy' (Article 18(1)) and that 'The Presidency shall be responsible for the implementation of decisions taken under this Title' (Article 18(2)). As is customary with declarations issued by the Presidency, all the European partners were duly informed of this initiative.
3. The Presidency declared that in contact with its European partners, it followed with great concern the course of events in Venezuela, that it strongly rejected the loss of human lives and conveyed its condolences to the relatives of the victims. The Presidency also expressed its full support and solidarity to the people of Venezuela and appealed for an end to all violent actions. Finally it called for the transitional government to respect the democratic values and institutions with a view to overcoming the crisis in a framework of national concord and in full respect for the basic rights and freedoms.
4. Since then, the EU has taken the opportunities offered by its relations with Venezuela to convey its satisfaction with the reestablishment of the democratic institutions and supports the initiatives taken by President Chavez to promote reconciliation and dialogue so that the Venezuelan people may fully develop their democracy.
5. The Council has repeatedly underlined the importance it attaches to the development of the Rule of Law and to the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms.
6. The Council hopes that all Venezuelan political and social actors, as well as the media, will behave responsibly to maintain stability so that differences can be resolved in the context of a peaceful, constructive dialogue.
7. The Council has also expressed its full support for the Inter-American Democratic Charter as well as the efforts undertaken by the Organisation of American States (OAS) in relation to the situation in Venezuela.
8. The Second EU-Latin America and Caribbean Summit, held in Madrid on 16 and 17 May, as well as the Summit between the EU and the Andean Community on 18 May, provided further opportunities to strengthen the values and democratic commitments shared by both regions.

(2002/C 309 E/121)

WRITTEN QUESTION P-1270/02

by **Konstantinos Hatzidakis (PPE-DE) to the Commission**

(26 April 2002)

Subject: Substandard work on projects jointly funded under the CSF and measures by the Greek authorities to tackle the problem

In its answer to my questions E-3197/01 and P-2890/01 (¹), the Commission informed me that it had no fresh information on substandard work on jointly funded projects in Greece. The Commission also pointed out that the Greek Government had not replied to either of its letters sent on 29 January 2001 and 2 July 2001 and that it would, therefore, send another letter to the Greek authorities.

Does the Commission have any more recent information regarding the number of instances of substandard work since April 2000?

Has the Commission received information about the practical action taken in the cases falling within categories 2 and 3 as described in Question E-3197/01?

Have the Greek authorities forwarded in reply to the European Anti-Fraud Office any communication (apart from that referred to in the answer to Written Question E-1894/01 ⁽²⁾) on the basis of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1681/94 ⁽³⁾ of 11 July 1994 concerning irregularities and the recovery of sums wrongly paid in connection with the financing of the structural policies and the organisation of an information system in this field? If not, what will be the consequences and what measures does the Commission intend to take?

⁽¹⁾ See page 2.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 134 E, 6.6.2002, p. 5.

⁽³⁾ OJ L 178, 12.7.1994, p. 43.

Answer given by Mr Barnier on behalf of the Commission

(17 May 2002)

The Commission is collecting the information it needs to answer the question. It will communicate its findings as soon as possible.

(2002/C 309 E/122)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1273/02

by Ioannis Souladakis (PSE) to the Council

(6 May 2002)

Subject: Subsidies to stock farmers

The Union's budget for 2002 provides for reductions in subsidies for sheep and goat meat from EUR 970 million to EUR 672 million on the grounds of the rise in prices for sheep and goat meat owing to 'mad cow' disease and the resultant crisis on the meat market in Europe (plummeting consumption of beef and a corresponding increase in consumption of other kinds of meat – lamb, veal etc.).

Owing to differences in diet in southern and Mediterranean Europe, consumption of sheep and goat meat in Greece is always high and, therefore, the increase in its commercial value resulting from greater demand was slight and did not match the increase for the same meat in northern Europe. These circumstances and the fact that subsidies for sheep and goat meat are to remain the same regardless of actual market prices create problems for sheep and goat farmers in southern Europe, particularly Greece.

Did the Council take account of the particular circumstances of sheep and goat farmers in Greece when proposing the above cuts and what measures will it take to restore the subsidies to their rightful level?

Reply

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1. The Council is not currently aware of any proposal seeking to amend the compensation rules established at the time of the latest reform of the CMO for sheepmeat and goatmeat.
2. Since his question concerns matters falling within the scope of an analysis of the state of the market for sheepmeat and goatmeat, the Honourable Member is referred to the European Commission's reply to his oral question H-0310/02 during question time at the European Parliament's part-session from 13 to 16 May 2002.