

Wednesday, 12 October 2005 - Brussels

Situation in Ethiopia

Ana Maria Gomes, on behalf of the PSE Group . - Mr President, last time I took the floor I said I was very much concerned. I still am. There were indeed very interesting developments since 1 October 2005 with negotiations being engaged, then brokered with the assistance of donor countries and ambassadors. However, according to my information, a stalemate still exists despite the fact that the Ethiopian Parliament has already been convened. The conduct of business, according to my information, is very deficient in terms of democratic standard.

I appreciate the statement by Commissioner Michel and I appreciate the efforts he has been making. I wish the Council and the British Presidency, in particular, would also give us their views on how things are working and if they think that their approach is effective. I am particularly concerned and I am aware of the special relationship the British Presidency holds with our allies on the other side of the Atlantic. The unity of the international community and of the donor communities in this respect is essential. I would like to hear the Council's approach on this.

I will not go further as I am still the head of the European Union election observation mission in Ethiopia. Naturally, I may make other comments after I deliver my final report. However, it is only proper that this Parliament shows that it cares and that it continues to closely monitor the situation in Ethiopia.