

Parliamentary questions

13 September 2011

E-008090/2011

Question for written answer
to the Commission

Rule 117

Ana Gomes (S&D)

Subject: Aid to Ethiopia

In an answer to a prior written question that I submitted following the publication of the 2010 Human Rights Watch report *Development without freedom: How aid underwrites repression in Ethiopia*, which describes how the Ethiopian government is using development aid as a tool for political repression, the Commission stated:

'In research conducted by the Donor Assistance Group in Ethiopia in response to earlier information received from Human Rights Watch, we did not find credible evidence of widespread or systematic political distortion.'

A recent joint undercover investigation by the BBC and the Bureau of Investigative Journalism, published on 5 August 2011, states that it 'has uncovered evidence that the Ethiopian government is using billions of dollars of development aid as a tool for political repression' (see: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/9556288.stm9>).

1. Will the Commission conduct an independent investigation to verify whether these new allegations apply to EU and Member States' development aid?
2. Is the Commission envisioning putting in place any safeguards or governance-related conditionality regarding the disbursements of aid to Ethiopia in order to ensure that aid is not misused for political repression?
3. Is the Commission intending to make use of the human rights clauses of the Cotonou Agreement and invoke the dialogue and consultation procedure to ensure that aid provided under the EDF is not misused for political repression?