

Wednesday, 23 April 2008 - Strasbourg

Situation in Burma (debate)

Ana Maria Gomes (PSE). - Mr President, I have been in Burma and seen the misery and the oppression under which the Burmese people live. Disgracefully, Europe has not done enough to help the Burmese - their courageous monks, their political prisoners, their brave leader Aung San Suu Kyi - to get freedom and to get rid of the junta oppressors.

Europe has not done enough to mobilise influential neighbours such as Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and especially Indonesia to come in support for those who fight for human rights and democracy in Burma.

Europe has not done enough to press China and India to stop supporting in one way or another the Burmese oppressors. Europe has not done enough to prevent and punish European companies such as the French Total who keep doing business in Burma, thus helping pay the drug mafia and the oppressors who form the Burmese junta. Europe must act now and refuse to accept the farce of a referendum.

Mr Barroso and his Commissioners heading to Beijing today must talk firmly and clearly about Burma and Beijing's responsibilities and its sad state. The current and the next Council presidency must act decisively to make a difference for the people of Burma, namely by strictly implementing the sanctions decided and by pushing the UN Security Council to act against the Burmese oppressors.