

WRITTEN QUESTION E-5031/08

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to the Commission

Subject: Conditions of detention in FYROM prisons

In a recent report, the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) describes the inhuman conditions of detention in the prisons of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM).

In particular, following visits to the prisons at Skopje, Tetovo and Idrizovo, members of the committee gave an account of degrading conditions of detention and ill-treatment of adults, minors and mentally retarded inmates.

The use of violence and drug dealing are prevalent in these institutions together with maladministration, lack of medical checks and health care for prisoners.

In correspondence on the situation, the competent authorities do not dispute this distressing conclusion.

The Commission's last progress report on FYROM in November 2007 makes the same observations and notes that no substantial progress has been made in this area and that its recommendations for improving the situation have not been implemented.

Ahead of this year's progress report, what new information does the Commission have in regard to the above observations? Are there any Community-funded programmes in this area and, if so, what results have they achieved?

How will the Commission put an end to this unacceptable situation in a country which is an applicant for accession?