

ORAL QUESTION H-0384/07

for Question Time at the part-session in June 2007
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Antonio López-Istúriz White
to the Commission

Subject: Arrival of pateras on the Majorcan coast from Algeria: a new point of entry for illegal immigration to Europe

At the end of April, two pateras (small boats) from Algeria reached the coast of the Balearic Islands, putting ashore in the south of Majorca. Since September 2006, four such vessels have illegally reached the Balearic Islands. The Spanish Government has failed to take effective measures as a matter of urgency to stop the arrival of fresh pateras, and prevent the Balearic Islands being used as a new route for illegal immigrants into Europe; this means that there is a risk that we will shortly be seeing scenes in the Balearic Islands no less tragic than those witnessed in recent years in regions like the Canaries. The Balearic Government believes that we should not wait until further boats reach the Islands before the Spanish Government takes special measures, including stepping up cooperation with Algeria in order to control the departure of illegal immigrants. There should be an increase in air and sea surveillance of the Balearic coasts and the Mediterranean in general. The present Spanish Government irresponsibly decided on a mass regularisation of immigrants two years ago, provoking a 'pull factor' which could now also have consequences for the Balearic Islands.

Does the Commission know whether the Spanish Government has asked the European Frontex Agency to collaborate on Mediterranean surveillance, so as to prevent the establishment of a new route for illegal immigration from Africa into Europe? Is the Commission going to take measures to prevent the consolidation of this new route to the Balearic Islands?

Tabled: 10.05.2007
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