

ORAL QUESTION H-0186/09
for Question Time at the part-session in April 2009
pursuant to Rule 109 of the Rules of Procedure
by Marie Anne Isler Béguin
to the Commission

Subject: Exploitation of uranium in Niger

European companies are exploiting uranium in Northern Niger. Niger is one of the least developed countries. However, its people derive no benefit from these activities. On the contrary, exploitation of uranium is leading to an environmental and health disaster: the mines have high levels of radioactivity and the mining waste presents a health risk to the people who live alongside the mines. Moreover, groundwater has been drained for exploitation of the deposits. The EU must ensure that European companies established in Africa assume their responsibilities.

What is the Commission's approach for ensuring that European uranium mining companies in Niger respect the local people's right to good health and the need to preserve groundwater? Can the Commission make sure that the local people share the economic benefits of the mining, particularly by means of the trade agreements between the EU and Niger?

Tabled: 23.03.2009

fr