

**Question for written answer E-014927/2015
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ivan Jakovčić (ALDE)

Subject: Closure of Italian Embassy in Santo Domingo and EU consular protection

In April 2014, Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the closure of the Italian embassy in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic). This has already affected thousands of Italian citizens living in the country. The current situation is that the competent consular offices are those in Panama, and Italians residing elsewhere in the Caribbean who were hitherto dependent on the services in Santo Domingo now also have to travel to Panama.

In April 2015 the EU Member States adopted the Directive on consular protection for European citizens living or travelling outside the EU. The agreement reached by the Council clarifies when and how EU citizens in 'distress' in a country outside the EU may exercise their right to receive assistance from other Member States' embassies or consulates.

Consular protection is guaranteed in certain types of situation, including 'in cases of arrest or detention, serious accident or serious illness and death, as well as with regard to providing relief and repatriation in cases of distress, or the issuance of emergency documents'.

However, in the case of the Dominican Republic it is not clear where families should seek to obtain visas for adopted children.

Could the Commission clarify in what situations EU consular protection applies and whether the phrase 'issuance of emergency documents' includes issuing visas for adopted children?