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IMPORTANT COMING MEETINGS

THIRD COUNTRY MEETINGS

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♦ **EU-Ukraine**

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MEETINGS

♦ **Plenary Session**

➤ 5-8 September 2005

♦ **Committee on Foreign Affairs**

- 29 August 2005
- 13 September 2005
- 4 October 2005

♦ **Subcommittee on Human Rights**

➤ 12 September 2005

♦ **Subcommittee on Security and Defence**

➤ 3 October 2005

◆ **Committee on Development**

- 29 August 2005
- 15 September 2005
- 4 October 2005

◆ **Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs**

- 13 September 2005
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◆ **Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

- 13 September 2005
- 14 September 2005
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REGIONS:

AFRICA

◆ **Zimbabwe**

- ▶ **Council of the European Union: declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union concerning the recent events in Zimbabwe (26.07.05)**

The European Union **welcomes the report of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy, Anna Tibaijuka**, on the Government of Zimbabwe's Operation Restore Order.

The European Union notes the Special Envoy's findings **that Operation Restore Order was indiscriminate and unjustified; conducted with indifference to human suffering; illegal under domestic and international law; and has caused a humanitarian crisis** of unprecedented proportions. In this respect, the EU **encourages the international community to provide unconditional humanitarian assistance to the population in need.**

The European Union joins the Special Envoy in calling on the Government of Zimbabwe to halt immediately all further demolitions; facilitate unrestricted access for international humanitarian assistance; and **to bring those directly responsible to justice.**

The European Union also joins the Special Envoy in **calling the Government of Zimbabwe to undertake corrective policy reforms in macro-economic management and governance issues.**

The European Union shares the view of the Special Envoy that the Government of Zimbabwe should promote real internal dialogue with the Zimbabwean civil society and with the international community.

The European Union calls upon the African Union and the **Southern African Development Community to raise the human rights situation with the Government of Zimbabwe** and urge it to address the profoundly distressing effects of the Operation Restore Order. (...)

http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/85837.pdf (EN)

AMERICAS

◆ **Brazil**

- ▶ **Steering the EU/Brazil – Mercosur relationship for the challenges ahead; speech by Benita Ferrero Waldner (28.07.05)**

At the Instituto Roberto Simonsen and the Federation of the Industries of the State of Sao Paulo Mrs Ferrero said that (...) Brazil needs to adjust to its new regional and global role. Above all, Brazilians must recognise that with power comes responsibility. We call upon you to set an example for your region by playing a positive role in global economic governance, whether in the WTO or in our bi-regional negotiations. The EU would like to cooperate more with Brazil in multilateral institutions, for example coordinating positions ahead of important international events, such as the UN Summit in September. This will be a vital moment for promoting an effective multilateral approach to international affairs, and by

creating alliances we stand a much better chance of **promoting our shared goals of peace and security, democracy, human rights, development and prosperity.**

The time is right for us to look again at our bilateral relations and ensure that they are adjusted to the challenges ahead.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/ferrero/2005/sp05_461.htm (EN)

ASIA

◆ South East Asia

- ▶ **Introductory remarks by Javier Solana EU High Representative for CFSP on the occasion of the EU-ASEAN Post Ministerial Conference** (28.07.05)

(...). The European Union has major strategic interests in East Asia, including economically and politically. (...)

This has been another year of dramatic developments and change.

The **tragedy of the tsunami** struck deeply into the hearts of all Europeans. (...) The European Union and **European Governments** have made **considerable financial contributions** to the costs of reconstruction, **adding to the extremely generous contributions made by ordinary people across Europe.**

The threat of terrorism remains ever present, throughout the world. The atrocities in London on 7 July underlined once again that terrorists have no scruples. Innocent civilians are likely to remain their main target. **We must continue our efforts to tackle terrorism effectively.** This requires not only **direct measures against the terrorists and their networks, but also broader moves to undermine terrorism at its roots,** including through **education** and through better understanding of each other's faiths and societies.

The EU warmly welcomes the continuing process of **regional integration in South east Asia.** We have watched with keen interest the development of the ASEAN communities. (...)

EU practical engagement with the region is again evidenced by our willingness to help in the **implementation of the Peace Agreement on Aceh,** due to be signed on 15 August.

http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/discours/85872.pdf (EN)

EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE) AND CIS

◆ Serbia

- ▶ **Parliamentary question: Minority rights in Serbia – Oral question by Bernd Posselt to the Council** (27.07.05)

Whilst the minorities in Kosovo have guaranteed seats in Parliament, in response to pressure from the Radical Party led by Vojslav Seselj, who is facing trial in The Hague, **Serbia** has been turned into a single constituency with **no local seats and a five per cent threshold.** As a result, the ethnic minorities living in potential crisis areas, i.e. the Vojvodina, the Sandzak region around Novi Pazar and the Presevo Valley, have been excluded on a de facto basis from involvement in parliamentary politics, even though they make up a majority of the population in their home regions.

Does the **Council acknowledge the risks** which may stem from **this imbalance** in the demands made on Kosovo and Serbia respectively, and what **impact will this imbalance have on the preparations for the EU Treaty negotiations with Belgrade?**

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=QT&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+QT+H-2005-0668+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

◆ Chechen Republic

- ▶ **Human Rights Commissioner attends Russian conference on human rights respect in the Chechen Republic** (27.07.05)

Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner Alvaro Gil Robles is visiting Russia from 27 to 31 July. He will participate in an **international conference** in Kislovodsk on strengthening **the role of justice in the defence of human rights in the Chechen Republic**. (...)

Top speakers include Chechen President Alu Alkhanov, leading human rights activist Ella Pamfilova, Russian Deputy Prosecutor General Nicolai Shepel and Deputy Interior Minister Arcadi Edelev.

A press briefing will be held on 28 July at 1 pm at the conference venue.

The Human Rights Commissioner will then go to Moscow, where he will meet the main NGOs for a discussion on human rights in Russia (31 July).

[http://press.coe.int/cp/2005/418a\(2005\).htm](http://press.coe.int/cp/2005/418a(2005).htm) (EN)

MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST

◆ Afghanistan

- ▶ **EU Election Observation Mission deployed in Afghanistan** (26.07.05)

An EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) for the 18 September parliamentary elections has now been deployed to Afghanistan. Working under the leadership of Ms. Emma Bonino, Member of the European Parliament and its Committee on Foreign Affairs, the EOM is a further contribution by the European Commission **to promote peace and democratisation in Afghanistan**.

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, stated: *"It is my priority to support democracy and stability in Afghanistan. The preparations for the elections are well advanced and I am delighted that Emma Bonino and her team have arrived in good time to accompany the process. The situation is still fragile and all steps are accompanied by high security measures. I believe it is therefore even more important that our EOM will increase transparency and confidence in the whole election process."*

Election Observation Missions are an important instrument for building confidence in the democratic process of a country. (...)

The mission will assess the election process including the post-election period. The EOM will issue a preliminary statement shortly after the elections and later a final report detailing the findings of the mission and offering recommendations on steps to be taken towards wider democratisation and possible improvement of the process.

http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/afghanistan/index.htm (EN)

◆ Iran

- ▶ European Union expresses concern at reports of the public execution of youths in Mashad, Iran (26.07.05)

“The European Union wishes to convey its deep concern over reports of a **public execution of two youths in Mashad on 19 July 2005** despite the fact that one of the youths, Mahmoud Asqary, was aged **under 18 at both the time of the crime and the execution**. The **EU recalls** its long-held position that **capital punishment may not, in any circumstances, be imposed on persons below 18 years of age at the time of the commission of their crime**. Such a punishment is in **direct contravention of Iran's obligations under the ICCPR and also the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child**.

The EU calls on Iran to clarify its position urgently. **In October 2004 the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran assured the EU that a moratorium was in place on all lashings and executions for crimes committed by those under the age of 18**. The EU hopes that a law abolishing such punishments will be adopted soon, and implemented, and until that time, calls for the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to respect the moratorium.” (...)

<http://www.eu2005.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1107293561746&a=KArticle&aid=1119530173570&date=2005-07-26> (EN)

◆ Iraq

- ▶ Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, condemns murder of Algerian diplomats in Iraq (28.07.05)

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), has sent a message to the Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika expressing his condemnation and sympathy on learning of the **murder of two Algerian diplomats**, Ali Balarousi and Azzedin Belkadi, who were **kidnapped in Baghdad last week**: (...)

http://ue.eu.int/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/declarations/85871.pdf (EN)

THEMATIC :

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

◆ Terrorism

- ▶ Parliamentary question: Harmonisation of the Member States' approach to combating terrorism – Oral question by Sajjad Karim to the Council (26.07.05)

The **counter-terrorism provisions adopted by certain Member States, under the guise of the fight against terrorism**, means that the EU must now face the reality that one of the **effects** of the terrorist threat is that the **hard-won liberties**, which underpin the shared values and principles of the Union, **are being challenged and undermined**. In the light of the bombings in Madrid on 11 March 2004 and in London on 7 July 2005, the EU is now facing a defining moment in its approach to combating this attack on the European way of life.

How does the Council, under the leadership of the UK Presidency, plan to **work together to overcome national differences and the bureaucratic hurdles within the 25 EU Member States** in order to develop a harmonised approach to combating terrorism which achieves a **balance between providing**

security to EU citizens whilst simultaneously guaranteeing their human rights and civil liberties, regardless of religious beliefs or ethnic origins?

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=QT&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+QT+H-2005-0661+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

► **Europe reacts to terror threat** (28.07.05)

Across Europe and internationally, governments are stepping up security in the wake of the continuing spate of attacks in London.

The **UK** has announced **new anti-terror measures including a database of individuals carrying on 'unacceptable behaviours' who would be excluded from the UK**. There would also be **new criminal offences of committing acts preparatory to terrorism**, indirect incitement to terrorism and giving and receiving terrorist training.

On 21 July, **Finland** announced that it would reintroduce **border checks** immediately, to last until the end of the athletics world championships on 14 August 2005. **France** has already **moved to suspend the Schengen freedoms from border controls** and there are **similar calls in Italy**.

The **French government** is **preparing a white paper on security measures** to combat the terrorist threat and has raised the level of security risk to red alert. Patrols have been stepped up in transport systems and **military presence increased**. **Border controls have been reintroduced as an emergency measure as allowed within the Schengen agreement**.

The **United States** is stepping up **pressure on the EU**. In the **UN Security Council on 20 July**, **several European states expressed concerns about violations of due process and human rights contained in anti-terror measures**. US delegates countered that **the world had to accept the burden and inconvenience of the fight against terror**. (...)

Germany has been more cautious on measures such as the **retention for long periods of telecommunications data**, but **since the London attacks** there have been **calls for surveillance of mosques** and plans are going ahead for more security cameras on public transport networks.

<http://www.euractiv.com/Article?tcmuri=tcm:29-142846-16&type=News> (EN)

► **Blair and Zapatero in anti terror "alliance of civilisations"** By Honor Mahony (28.07.05)

British Prime Minister Tony Blair has thrown his weight behind a Spanish idea for an **'alliance of civilisations' to form a united front against terrorism**.

The proposal **to bring together Christian and Muslim nations** was raised by Spain's leader Jose Rodriguez Zapatero during a bilateral meeting on Wednesday (27 July).

"We discussed the proposal that the Spanish Prime Minister has made for what he calls an alliance of civilisations, which is the idea that we join together, **our countries with Muslim countries**", said **Mr Blair** after the meeting.

"I think this is a proposal with possibilities in it that we can develop over the months to come", he added.

"It is the terrorists who want to stir up these differences between Islam and the rest of the world", said Mr Blair just days after terrorists tried to detonate more bombs in London and two weeks after bombs killed 56 people in the capital.

For his part, Mr Zapatero said (...) "Beyond the positions that each country has adopted on the military intervention in Iraq, I must say **the risk is globalised**, as we have just seen in the bombing in Egypt".

The terrorist threat is a threat to all. This threat from radical Islamic terrorism affects us all equally", said the Spanish leader. (...)

Details about what an alliance of civilisations would entail are still sketchy but are likely to be worked out over the next few months.

But Mr Blair was keen to stress that **Turkey**, the huge and **mainly Muslim EU-hopeful**, would also **support the idea**.

"Turkey is **particularly involved** in this - to form a **coalition of civilised people from whatever race or religion to combat the barbarity of terrorism**", he said.

<http://euobserver.com/?sid=9&aid=19652> (EN)