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- October, 22, 2007

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- October, 9, 2007

Subcommittee on Human Rights

- November, 5, 2007

Subcommittee on security and defence

- October, 9, 2007

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and home affairs

- October, 8, 2007

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

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Committee on budgetary control

- November, 6, 2007

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AFRICA

Africa

- ▶ **EU Strategy for Africa: Development Committee calls for stronger parliamentary dimension** (3/10/2007)

The EU Strategy for Africa needs a stronger parliamentary dimension, says an own-initiative report, adopted by the EP Development Committee on Wednesday, that sets out priorities for the EU-Africa Strategy to be adopted at the second EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in December. MEPs will meet African MPs in Lisbon prior to the Summit.

"The 2005 EU Strategy for Africa was adopted without in-depth consultation with the African Union (AU) institutions and African governments and parliaments", notes the committee, which wants to see co-operation between the EP, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the African regional parliaments encouraged.

The committee report, drafted by Maria Martens (EPP-ED, NL), was adopted unanimously.

Lisbon parliamentary meeting

A 25-strong delegation of MEPs, most of whom are Development Committee members, will meet 25 members of the Pan-African Parliament in Lisbon on 7 December, where a joint declaration by both Parliaments is likely to be adopted. EP President Hans-Gert Pöttering and PAP President Gertrude Mongella will be invited to address the Heads of States and Governments meeting on 8 December.

Arms control

The report says that existing commitments to control the arms trade should be implemented in full and that the EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports should be upgraded to a legally-binding Common Foreign and Security Policy Common Position. The EU should also accelerate the implementation of the EU Strategy to Combat the Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW), it adds.

Migration and brain drain

The joint strategy should address the root causes of migration and to pay particular attention to the rights and the integration of migrants and to the issue of the "brain drain", particularly in the health sector, by proposing practical solutions for successful "circular" migration, says the report.

Crimes against humanity and impunity

Provisions to address impunity should be included in the joint strategy, says the committee, which calls for Africa's legal and judicial systems to be strengthened, in accordance with human rights, to enable them to try perpetrators of serious crimes against humanity in Africa itself.

EPAs

MEPs acknowledge that the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) can "become an important tool for African trade and regional integration, but only on condition that their substance fully accords with development policy objectives", by providing exemptions and long transition periods where necessary to enable domestic producers and industries to adapt to new market situations and to allow regional integration to proceed at its own pace.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/028-11140-275-10-40-903-20071003IPR11139-02-10-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

Sudan

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on the attack against AU Mission in Sudan (2/10/2007)**

The European Union expresses its strong condemnation of the heinous attack on the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) camp in Haskanita in Darfur and the killing and abduction of AMIS soldiers. It offers its sincere condolences to the families of soldiers killed.

The EU reiterates that it considers any attack against AMIS as a deliberate violation of existing ceasefire agreements and UN Security Council Resolutions. It calls on the Cease Fire Commission to fully investigate the attack and to hold those responsible to account.

This unprecedented attack on AU peacekeepers underlines the need for all parties in the Darfur peace process to commit themselves to an immediate cessation of hostilities, and join the efforts led by the AU and the UN to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/Declaracoes_PESC/20071002PESCsudo.htm

Burundi

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on recent events in Burundi (4/10/2007)**

The European Union welcomes the recent political development in Burundi, and the harmonious atmosphere which seems to reign there. The President's address to the nation on 27 September lays the foundations for open and inclusive exercise of power, for the benefit of the whole of the Burundian people. The European Union therefore calls on all the political partners in Burundi to respond favourably to this development/message from the Head of State, to enable the institutions to work legitimately and efficiently. The Union hopes that the new foundations which have been laid will enable the Parliament and the Government of Burundi to rise to the pressing challenges of good economic governance. They should also encourage Palipehutu-FNL to rejoin the institutions set up by the agreements of 7 September 2006 without delay.

<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/showPage.ASP?lang=en>

AMERICAS

ASIA

Burma/Myanmar

► COREPER discussion on Burma/Myanmar (3/10/2007)

- Coreper discussed today the EU's continuing overall response to developments in Burma/Myanmar.
- It underlined the importance of further political and diplomatic action, including at the UN (follow-up to Mr Gambari's visit) and engaging with key players, notably in the region.
- It expressed concern for the plight of the population in Burma/Myanmar and requested the Commission to explore ways to increase humanitarian assistance.
- It agreed to toughen EU sanctions against the regime in Burma/Myanmar, and requested that all preparatory steps be undertaken with a view to the necessary decisions to be taken at the General Affairs and External Relations Council on 15 October.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071003BURMA.htm

Inter-Korean Summit

► Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on the second inter-Korean Summit (1/10/2007)

The European Union follows with keen interest all efforts to reduce the tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Accordingly, the EU supports any initiative conducive to the fostering of peace, stability and cooperation on the Peninsula.

The EU reiterates its support for the inter-Korean dialogue and hopes that the Summit between President Roh Moo-hyun and General Secretary Kim Jong-il, to be held from 2-4 October, will serve to reinforce the growing atmosphere of confidence and trust on the Korean Peninsula, which would also contribute to efforts within the framework of the Six-Party Talks, a process fully supported by the EU, to achieve the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/Declaracoes_PESC/20071001PESC1.htm

EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE) AND CIS

Russia

► Presidency statement EU/Russia human rights consultations (3/10/2007)

The European Union and the Russian Federation held the sixth round of their intergovernmental Consultations on human rights issues today (3 October). The meeting took place in an open and forward looking atmosphere and covered the human rights situation in the EU and Russia as well as issues relating to the international protection of human rights.

At today's meeting, the EU raised a number of specific concerns about the human rights situation in Russia, in particular regarding **freedom of expression and assembly**, above all in the run-up to the parliamentary and presidential elections. Other concerns raised related to **freedom of the press, the position of Russian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society** following the entry into force of the law on NGO activities and the counter-extremism law, as well as respect for the rule of law and the situation in the Northern Caucasus. The two sides also discussed the **issues of minorities, combating torture and maltreatment** as well as the issue of **women rights**, including trafficking.

At Russia's request, the EU provided details of current developments in various EU Member States.

The discussions also focused on the international human rights obligations of the EU and Russia, including cooperation in UN human rights fora. Cooperation within the Council of Europe, e.g. on the implementation of its decisions and recommendations, including judgments of the European Court of Human Rights and access of citizens to the European Court of Human Rights, was likewise discussed. The discussions also covered OSCE matters including NGO participation and ODIHR election observation.

In keeping with its policy to closely involve civil society in the debate on human rights, the EU delegation met representatives of Russian NGOs the day before the EU-Russian consultations.

The EU Troika was led for the Portuguese Presidency by Mr. António Ricoca Freire, Deputy Political Director General for Multilateral Affairs in the Portuguese Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Ms. Riina Kionka, the Personal Representative of the EU High Representative Javier Solana for Human Rights, Mr. Gunnar WIEGAND, Acting Director and Head of Unit Russia, DG RELEX and Democratisation, and Ms. Smiljana Knez, Head of the Human Rights Unit in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the forthcoming Slovene Council Presidency, also took part in the talks.

The Russian delegation was led by Oleg Malginov, Director of the Department of Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights of the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The Human Rights Consultations between the EU and Russia took place for the first time in Luxembourg in March 2005. The aim of the Consultations is to discuss issues related to human rights and fundamental freedoms in a constructive and open atmosphere. The next regular Consultations are planned to take place under the Slovene EU Presidency.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071003EURUSSIA.htm

Ukraine

- ▶ **EU Presidency statement on the Preliminary Findings and Conclusions of the International Election Observation Mission for the Pre-term Parliamentary Elections in Ukraine on 30 September** (1/10/2007)

Having taken note of the preliminary findings and conclusions of the International election Observation Mission for the 30th September pre-term parliamentary elections in Ukraine, the Presidency welcomes the fact that the elections were conducted mostly in line with international commitments and standards for democratic elections confirming an open and competitive environment for the conduct of election processes.

However, the Presidency notes the concerns identified by the International Election Observation Mission, including the poor quality of voter lists and underlines the need to further strengthen the electoral and constitutional framework in order to consolidate the democratic process in Ukraine.

The Presidency of the EU calls upon all parties to respect the results of the elections and act in accordance with democratic norms. The Presidency urges parties to engage in constructive talks in order to establish swiftly a government and ensure the necessary political stability for Ukraine. The Presidency stresses the need to establish a viable constitutional system, enabling the country to move forward with political and economic reforms, based on the respect of the principles of democracy, rule of law, human rights and market economy.

The EU stands ready to assist Ukraine in these efforts and looks forward to working with the new government.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/Declaracoes_PESC/20071001PESC5.htm

Turkey

► EU Presidency statement on the attack in the Turkish province of Sirnak (1/10/2007)

The EU Presidency strongly condemns the terrorist attack carried out last Saturday in Turkey, in the Province of Sirnak, that caused at least 12 casualties.

The EU Presidency expresses its condolences and solidarity to the families of the victims and wishes the injured a quick recovery.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/Declaracoes_PESC/20071001PESC3.htm

Turkey

► EP Foreign Affairs Committee: Praise for Turkey's renewed commitment to reform, but concerns remain (3/10/2007)

The Foreign Affairs committee has welcomed the recent elections in Turkey, especially the new government's renewed commitment to reforms. In a resolution adopted on Wednesday, exactly two years after the accession negotiations with Turkey began, the committee also indicated areas in which further progress was still necessary, especially concerning the content of upcoming constitutional reforms.

The resolution on EU-Turkey relations, drafted by Ria Oomen-Ruijten (EPP-ED, NL) and adopted without opposition, congratulates Turkey on its recent legislative elections, and "welcome[s] the election of the new President as a sign of strength of the Turkish democracy." It also welcomes "the commitment of the new government to enhance the reform process in the coming months and years," as well as "the intention of the new Turkish government to adopt a new and civilian constitution which would protect fundamental human rights and freedoms."

Members support the opening of negotiations on the energy chapter, and encourage Turkey to join the European Energy Community, given the country's importance as a transit hub for gas supplies. They also note that "accession negotiations with Turkey were opened" exactly one year ago this day (Wednesday), adding that they are "the starting point for an open-ended process."

Political reforms

The report strongly condemns the murders of Hrant Dink and Andrea Santoro, and "underlines the urgent need to efficiently combat all types of extremism and violence." The Committee stresses that "further efforts are needed to ensure full and effective civilian control over the military," and calls for parliamentary supervision of the secret services, gendarmerie, and police forces, as well. The report "deplores that a number of persons is still being prosecuted under Article 301 of the penal code" and regards the freedom of expression and the freedom of the press as "a number one priority of the government."

The report urges the Turkish government "to implement the provisions stemming from the Association Agreement and its Additional Protocol," noting specifically in relation to the Cyprus question that "the withdrawal of Turkish forces would facilitate the negotiation of a settlement." While strongly condemning the violence perpetrated by the PKK, the report "urges the new government to launch a political initiative.

favours a lasting settlement of the Kurdish issue," and points out the need for a "comprehensive strategy for the social-economic development of the South East of Turkey." MEPs in the committee also underline the need to "pursue the fight against terrorism proportionate to the threat, and with full commitment towards international legal instruments," and call on Turkey to refrain from violating Iraq's territory

Commission

The text asks the Commission to provide "targeted support to civil society," with particular attention to the South East of the country. MEPs in the committee also ask the Commission to report specifically on the implementation and effectiveness of the financial support instrument to the Turkish Cypriot community. Finally, the report calls for the Commission to publish the results of its monitoring of political criteria in its forthcoming progress report, including the following aspects: judiciary reforms, combating corruption, respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, implementation of the zero-tolerance-to-torture policy, and the protection of women and minority, religious, and cultural rights.

The Commission and the Council will make a statement on EU-Turkey relations to the plenary session of the Parliament on 24 October, in Strasbourg, to be followed by a debate with MEPs. The resolution from the Foreign Affairs Committee will be put to the vote during the same session, in advance of the Commission's annual progress report on Turkey's accession, which is due to be published on 7 November.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-11022-275-10-40-903-20071001IPR11001-02-10-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST

Iraq

- ▶ **Iraq needs full sovereignty to improve security says Iraqi Parliament Speaker** (2/10/2007)

"Iraq's social fabric has been destroyed," Mahmoud Al-Mashadani, the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament told the Foreign Affairs Committee today. MEPs asked him what the EP could do to help. "We need the international community to say: enough of this slow killing of Iraqis," and the multinational force needs to leave the country as soon as possible, the Speaker said.

"The so-called liberation effort brought down not only the Saddam regime but the entire state, including economic and security institutions," the Speaker said. "Our infrastructure was intentionally destroyed," he added, and now "we are a failed state according to international standards." Whenever Iraqis succeed, "the occupying forces are congratulated, and whenever they fail to provide security, we are labelled ineffective", noted Mr Al-Mashadani.

Sectarian violence

José Ignacio Salafranca (EPP-ED, ES) asked about the roots and causes of the violence currently ravaging the country. Mr. Al-Mashadani replied that "sectarianism was not a problem in the past," and noted the fact that several members of his delegation were in cross-sectarian marriages. He added that the multinational force has been "wary of sufficiently arming the Iraqi forces," which he said contributed to the lack of security in the country.

"Is the idea of separating Sunni and Shia regions not a recipe for civil war?", asked Philippe Morillon (ALDE, FR). "We need to have a federation," and to keep Iraq unified, replied the Speaker, agreeing that separating Sunni and Shia populations would open the door to a new sectarian war, and that a partition of the country

was not a realistic option. "Europe has a responsibility to support reconciliation in Iraq", said Nickolay Mladenov (EPP-ED, BU).

Foreign military presence

The Speaker emphasized the problem of limited sovereignty in Iraq. "The Chief of the Iraqi military obeys American military commands," he said, arguing for a withdrawal of foreign troops as soon as possible. Tobias Pflüger (EUL/NGL, DE) asked whether he had a timetable in mind for this withdrawal. Mr Al-Mashadani replied that he does not have "a concrete timetable in mind for the withdrawal of the multinational force," but that Iraq must "concentrate on plans to build up our security, instead," so as to make such a withdrawal possible

Miguel Portas (EUL/NGL, PT) asked for comments on the presence in Iraq of private security companies such as Blackwater, which has been recently accused of opening fire on civilians without provocation. Mr Al-Mashadani replied that such companies "obey no law," and do not "respect Iraq's sovereignty." He also confirmed statements by Giulietto Chiesa (PES, IT), who said Iran was known to be providing assistance to Iraqi insurgents. "Many regional agendas exist to destabilize Iraq," Mr Al-Mashadani said.

Diversity of Iraqi views

Several other Iraqi MPs took the floor, some noting that "torture in prisons run by the interior ministry is widespread," others saying that international reports of human rights violations in Iraq are exaggerated. Véronique De Keyser (PES, BE) expressed concern about corruption in all levels of government, which made European Union aid very difficult to administer. An Iraqi MP, Omar Khalaf Al-Jabbuuri asked the European Union to conceive a "Marshall Plan for Iraq," while also saying that Europe needed to recognise "that we have the right to fight the occupiers."

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-11018-275-10-40-903-20071001IPR10997-02-10-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

THEMATIC :

FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

EXTERNAL RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT-RELATED ISSUES

EU / UN REFORM

EU Reform

- ▶ **Text of the reformed Treaty** (5/10/2007)

The project of the Reform Treaty resulting from technical negotiations is now available here (Source: Council's site dedicated to the IGC)

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071004tratado.htm

MISCELLANEOUS

Children rights

- ▶ **Conclusions of Justice Ministers on "Child protection"** (2/10/2007)

The ministers of Justice, gathered in Lisbon, for Justice and Home Affairs informal council and trying to answer to the more serious and concrete problems of the European citizens, acknowledge the following:

- a) There is a strong political will, shown by ministers of Justice, which is determinant regarding child protection in Europe, where crimes do not respect the States borders
- b) Quick and efficient cooperation between Member States, relevant national authorities, European Union bodies and agencies allows joint and coordinated prevention and fight against child abuse and there is the determination to work together;
- c) Civil society's, in particular ONGs, contribution towards child protection must be acknowledged and promoted;
- d) Crimes committed against children do not know any boundaries and are often fostered by internet;
- e) Promoting legislative solutions is not the only answer to the problem; it is imperative to adopt concrete measures at Community level leading to effective and immediate improvement of child protection, giving an additional role to mediation procedures;
- f) European Union should encourage the universal protection of children in its external relations.

The ministers of Justice suggest the following:

- 1) E-Justice portal should include a list of missing children, established and updated in cooperation with relevant national authorities
- 2) E-Justice portal should facilitate direct contact with central authorities in the scope of the Hague Convention of 1980 on civil aspects of international child abduction and with European Mediator whose role should be strengthened

- 3) Setting up a flexible EU-wide child abduction alert, complementing cooperation between relevant national authorities. Based primarily in the media and oriented to people in general, its use should be limited to judiciously selected cases;
- 4) Crimes committed against children with the help of internet should be condemned and punished; the Commission is asked to present proposals for measures designed to improve prevention and the fight against those actions;
- 5) European and international legislative instruments to fight against cybercrime committed against minors, namely the ones associated to sexual exploitation (child pornography, child grooming) like the Council of Europe Conventions on Cybercrime and on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, should be ratified and enforced by Member States;
- 6) Implementation of cooperation mechanisms between different national authorities, in particular the 24/7 network set up by Framework Decision 2005/222/JHA, of 24 February 2005, on attacks against information systems that ensures cooperation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, should be operational and assessed
- 7) Cooperation and exchange of pertinent information between relevant national authorities and Europol and Eurojust must be reinforced
- 8) The promotion of children's rights and the international legislative framework for protection of children must constitute a priority in the context of JHA' external relations, namely with Union's neighbour countries.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071002ConclusoesJAI.htm

Humanitarian Aid

► **EP DEVE Report on the "European Consensus and Humanitarian Aid" (3/10/2007)**

The EP Development Committee today adopted an own-initiative report outlining the EP's position on the "European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid", aimed at rationalising the efforts and the distribution of aid between the European Commission and the Member States. The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid is likely to be signed by the three institutions in plenary in Strasbourg on 12 December.

Rapporteur Thierry Cornillet (ALDE, FR), said after the adoption of his report: "this text is a good basis for negotiation with the Council of Ministers and the European Commission".

The report - adopted unanimously - insists that the Consensus needs "to be clearer and more specific in order to enhance European humanitarian policy" and also to ensure that the EU's potential as a humanitarian donor is fully exploited". The EU, i.e. the European Commission and the Member States, collectively, is the world's leading humanitarian aid donor. In 2006 the EU contributed over €2 billion, which is over 40% of official international humanitarian assistance.

The committee reaffirms that EU civil protection and military assets and capabilities must be deployed in a way which complements and supports the work of humanitarian organisations. it should be limited to those cases or areas where they can provide real added value.

The report stresses the need to clarify the relations between activities supported by the Commission via the

Stability instrument for crisis prevention, management and resolution (such as disarmament, demobilisation, mine clearing, reintegration of displaced populations/refugees, etc.), and the concomitant activities carried out by DG ECHO, the Commission's humanitarian aid office.

Thierry Cornillet, who is the European Parliament's standing rapporteur on Humanitarian Aid, presented his initial proposals to the Informal gathering of Development and Cooperation Ministers in Funchal (Madeira) from 20 to 22 September, in the run-up to the December EU-Africa Summit.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/028-11138-275-10-40-903-20071003IPR11137-02-10-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm