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- December, 18, 19, 2007

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- February, 11, 2008

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- December, 17, 18, 2007

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- December, 17, 2007

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- December, 18, 19, 2007

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REGIONS:

AFRICA

Burundi

- ▶ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the situation in Burundi (27/11/2007)

The European Union welcomes the formation of a new Government of broad consensus in Burundi, as part of a dynamic, forward-looking process of dialogue and consultation.

This new political context opens up very encouraging prospects and the European Union hopes that it will help provide the stability and calm which those concerned require in order to focus on the numerous challenges that continue to mark the process of reconstructing the country and consolidating peace, and in particular transitional justice.

In that context, it calls upon the Government of Burundi to seize this new opportunity to establish once and for all the principles for the efficient and transparent management of State affairs. The European Union stands ready to support Burundi in this endeavour. It welcomes the recent agreement with the IMF.

The European Union hopes that with political calm restored, Burundi will be able, in particular, to make progress towards transitional justice. It welcomes the establishment of a tri-partite Steering Group charged with organising national consultations and hopes that it will be able to proceed with its work as efficiently as possible.

Finally, the European Union calls upon the Government of Burundi and the FNL to resume in a constructive manner the negotiation process for implementation of the agreements signed in 2006, and supports the major role taken by the Regional Initiative. It is essential that the FNL should return to its place in the joint verification and monitoring mechanism.

AMERICAS

ASIA

China

- ▶ Keep up human rights pressure on China in the run-up to 2008 Olympics (27/11/2007)

With next year's Olympic Games in Beijing just around the corner, the world must keep up the pressure on China over its human rights record, a hearing of the European Parliament's Human Rights Subcommittee attended by over 200 people was told on Monday. Several NGOs, including a Chinese dissident speaking live via internet telephone conference, described the widespread human rights violations still being perpetrated by the authorities.

Opening the hearing, subcommittee chair Hélène Flautre (Greens/EFA, FR), pointed out that it was taking place two days ahead of the 10th EU-China summit. She regretted the absence from the hearing of a representative from the Chinese embassy.

A "human rights disaster" in China

The first guest speaker was cyber-dissident Hu Jia, who with his wife Zeng Jinyan was one of the candidates for the EP's Sakharov Prize this year. Speaking from house arrest in Beijing on a webphone link via an interpreter, **Hu Jia told the hearing that "a human rights disaster" was taking place in his country. A million people had been persecuted for fighting for human rights, many being detained in camps or mental hospitals.** He highlighted the "irony" that the head of China's Olympic Games body was also head of the National Security Bureau, which he likened to "the mafia being in charge of the games". There was a conflict between the West's hope that holding the games in China "would foster democracy and openness" and the Chinese authorities' hope that the games would legitimise their rule. He urged Europe to "stand firm" and in particular not sell arms to China. Hu Jia was unable to answer questions from Ana Gomes (PES, PT), who asked whether it was true that a senior party official had called for the authorities to "come clean on Tiananmen Square" and how many people were still detained in prisons or hospitals because of those events.

IOC must not duck the issue

Former Olympic fencing champion Pál Schmitt (EPP-ED, HU), who is now an MEP but spoke on Monday in his capacity as a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), initially insisted that **the IOC "does not take the lead in human rights and political matters" and is "not in a position to pressure China on issues outside the Games"**. The IOC's view was that it was best "to hold open a new door to China". This view was questioned by H  l  ne Flautre and openly challenged by Edward McMillan-Scott (EPP-ED, UK), who said "Article 1 of the Olympic Charter refers to fundamental ethical principles, so the IOC does have a mandate to look at these matters". Moreover, the IOC had once banned South Africa from the games because of apartheid, thus showing that "it can take political positions". Indeed, Mr McMillan-Scott argued "it is time for the IOC to make a political statement" on the situation in China. Mr Schmitt subsequently agreed to this, saying he would speak to the IOC board, which he admitted "cannot close its ears" to these demands any longer.

Phelim Kine (*Human Rights Watch*, Hong Kong) focused on the issue of media freedom, pointing out that in order to be awarded the 2008 games, China had promised that the media would be able to operate freely. But, he said, "the IOC is failing to ensure that China lives up to its promises" and is "turning a deaf ear" to Human Rights Watch's reports.

Mr McMillan-Scott read out a speech on behalf of Hong Bing Yuan, a Chinese human rights defender now resident in Australia who was unable to travel to Monday's hearing. According to this statement, "people are still being imprisoned and murdered", the treatment of Falun Gong is a "human rights disaster", "90 million people are working as slave labour" and overall the situation will "bring shame and disgrace to the Olympic spirit".

"The struggle for human rights in China is a marathon"

Sharon Hom (of the New York based NGO *Human Rights in China*) spoke of the authorities having a "blacklist of 42 categories of banned individuals", which she described as "a chilling tool for social control and intimidation". This, she said, "should be of concern to the IOC". She also said the government was "having trouble maintaining domestic control while presenting an open image to the world" and urged the EU to maintain the pressure in bilateral meetings with China. "The struggle for human rights is a marathon", she said, but if successful it would be "good for China and the world".

The final speaker was Vincent Metten (*International Campaign for Tibet*), who highlighted the clampdown on Buddhism, the "demographic colonisation" and environmental deterioration of the region and the socio-economic marginalisation of Tibetans.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/015-13596-330-11-48-902-20071126IPR13587-26-11-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

Pakistan

- ▶ **Javier Solana – EU High Representative for the CFSP welcomes recent developments in Pakistan** (29/11/2007)

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), today made the following statement on the latest developments in Pakistan: "Today, President Pervez Musharraf has been sworn in for a new term as President of Pakistan after he honoured his commitment and stepped down as Chief of Staff of the Army yesterday. This is a step in the right direction that will help Pakistan to return to the path of democracy. It is now important to hold parliamentary elections, as scheduled, in January. The early lifting of the state of emergency and restoration of the constitution will be crucial to ensure free and fair elections.

I would like to reconfirm my support for Pakistan, a country which is an important partner of the European Union in many fields, including in the fight against terrorism."

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/declarations/97322.pdf

India

- ▶ **Joint Statement of the 8th India-EU Summit** (30/11/2007)

The eighth India-European Union Summit was held in Delhi on 30 November 2007. The Republic of India was represented by Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, External Affairs Minister, Shri Kamal Nath, Minister for Commerce and Industry, Shri M K Narayanan, National Security Adviser. The EU was represented by Mr José Sócrates, Prime Minister of Portugal, in his capacity as President of the European Council, by Mr José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, Mr Peter Mandelson, European Commissioner for Trade, and Mr João Gomes Cravinho, Portuguese Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

The following message was jointly issued:

- (...) In the 60th year of India's independence and the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome, India and the EU, as the two largest democracies of the world and global actors in a multipolar world, underscored their commitment to the Strategic Partnership launched at The Hague in November 2004. They reaffirmed that the Strategic Partnership flows from a shared conviction in the values of democracy, fundamental freedoms (including religious), pluralism, rule of law, respect for human rights and multilateralism in the international political architecture as the means to tackle global challenges effectively. They expressed their determination to further strengthen the Strategic Partnership and to cooperate at the global level for the cause of peace, security and sustainable development for all.

- (...) Emphasising the paramount need for effective multilateralism and their commitment to a rules-based international order, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to intensify cooperation at the United Nations and in multilateral fora to address issues of global concern, including in the areas of human rights, development and the environment. The Summit underlined the importance of a strong, effective and efficient United Nations Organisation and the leaders also recognised the need for a comprehensive UN reform. The Summit agreed to work jointly towards strengthening the role of the UN Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, and stressed the need to maintain momentum in the efforts to adapt the United Nations to the needs of today's world. In this same context the leaders stressed the need for more efficient environmental activities in the UN system. They also agreed to continue to explore the possibility of a more coherent institutional framework, building on existing institutions.

- Both sides remain committed to reinforcing cooperation within the UN Human Rights Council and enhancing their dialogue on human rights, both in a bilateral and multilateral context. Both the EU and India are committed to respecting, protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as promoting good governance. The Summit leaders also stressed the importance of eliminating impunity for the perpetrators of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071130INDIAStatement.htm

China

► **Joint Statement of the 10th China-EU Summit (03/12/2007)**

The Tenth China-EU Summit was held in Beijing on 28 November 2007. Premier Wen Jiabao of the State Council of China attended the meeting on behalf of the People's Republic of China. The EU was represented by the President of the European Council, Prime Minister Jose Socrates of the Portuguese Republic and the President of the European Commission, Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso.

Leaders of the two sides had an overall review of the development of the bilateral relations since the establishment of the mechanism of China-EU Summit in 1998. They agreed that over the decade, China-EU relations have made a historical progress. Leaders expressed their satisfaction with the comprehensive cooperation between the two sides in broad fields and at all levels, and with the growing maturity of the China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership.

The two sides briefed each other on their respective latest developments. Leaders stated that the current world is now undergoing extensive and profound changes, and that as comprehensive strategic partners, both at a crucial stage of development, China and the EU would, upholding the spirit of democracy, harmony and collaboration for win-win results, continue to work together to promote democracy in international relations, advance a more balanced development of economic globalization to ensure mutual benefit and win-win progress. **They would work to promote human civilization, be committed to the peaceful settlement of international disputes, support each other and make concerted efforts to jointly safeguard planet Earth for the benefit of all mankind.** Reaffirming their commitment in favour of preserved environment and sustainable development, they would work to promote the building of a harmonious world of durable peace, common prosperity. This not only serves the fundamental interests of the two sides, but also world peace, stability, and development and human rights.

To this end, leaders of the two sides agreed:

(..) **-The two sides emphasised their commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights and continued to place a high value on the EU-China human rights dialogue, including the accompanying legal seminar. They underlined the importance of concrete steps in the field of human rights and reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen dialogue and cooperation in this field on the basis of equality and mutual respect, while making efforts to achieve more meaningful and positive results on the ground. The EU welcomed China's commitment to ratifying the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) as soon as possible. In respect of the global fight against genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity, they also noted the importance of the International Criminal Court.**

Both sides confirmed their commitment to cooperate with UN human rights mechanism and their respect for international human rights standards provided for in relevant international human rights instruments including the rights of minorities. The two sides were committed to supporting the UN Human Rights Council in performing its function to address human rights issues in a credible, objective and non-selective manner. Both sides undertook to strengthen their communication and coordination in this regard in line with UN General Assembly Resolution 60/251.

- Emphasising the paramount need for effective multilateralism, leaders stressed their strong support for a fair, just and rules-based multilateral international system with the UN playing a central role. They reiterated their commitment to promote peace and security, development and human rights, as recognized in the 2005 UN World Summit outcome document. The two sides expressed their support for reform of the United Nations system which would improve the UN's strength, efficiency and effectiveness to cope with new and existing threats and challenges. The two sides maintained that multilateralism served as an important means to resolve international disputes. They will remain committed to promoting the establishment of a fair and effective collective security mechanism in the spirit of mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination, and the settling of differences and disputes in a peaceful manner through diplomatic channels. The two sides support the United Nations, and recognize its primacy in international affairs through the Security Council which has the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071202CHINA.htm

EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE) AND CIS

Kosovo

► Troika on Kosovo: the Baden Conference (28/11/2007)

The EU/ U.S./Russia negotiating Troika has completed an intensive conference with the delegations from Belgrade and Pristina to discuss Kosovo's status. The Troika brought together leaders of both sides in Baden, Austria, for nearly three days of intense talks.

The Baden Conference marks the end of Troika-sponsored face to face negotiations. Over the course of the talks, the Troika urged the parties to consider a broad range of options for Kosovo's status. The Troika explored together with both sides every reasonable status outcome for Kosovo to determine where there might be potential for a mutually-acceptable outcome. **Regrettably, the parties were unable to reach an agreement on Kosovo's future status.** Nevertheless, the Troika believes that the parties benefited from this period of intensive dialogue. It was an opportunity for them to build trust and to identify shared interests, in particular their desire to seek a better future through achievement of a European perspective. The Troika-led negotiations provided the parties six occasions to discuss directly the final status of Kosovo. The negotiations created an opportunity to engage in dialogue at the highest levels. These meetings have permitted the Troika to reiterate the importance of maintaining peace, avoiding incitement to violence and jeopardizing security in the region. The parties have accepted these principles repeatedly, most recently during the Baden Conference. Both sides made it clear they wish to avoid violence. This commitment to peace must continue after the Troika completes its work on December 10. The Troika calls on Belgrade and Pristina to maintain communications without prejudice to their positions on status. It is up to Belgrade and Pristina to sustain their commitment to peace and dialogue on issues of mutual concern.

The Troika will now begin to draft the report which will be submitted no later than December 10 to Secretary General by the Contact Group. During the Troika's December 3 visit to Belgrade and Pristina, it will review this report with the parties. After the Contact Group submits the report to the UN Secretary General, the Troika's mandate will conclude.

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/declarations/97300.pdf

Georgia

► EP calls on Georgia to respect democratic principles and freedom of expression (29/11/2007)

The European Parliament held a debate during the Strasbourg plenary on 14 November, debating the situation in Georgia along with the EU's Neighbourhood Policy. **The resolution following this debate was voted in Brussels, and calls on the Georgian authorities to "respect the principle of freedom of expression, including freedom of assembly and freedom of the media," and to investigate violations of human rights and the freedom of the media during the past few weeks.**

After a week-long series of opposition protests in Tbilisi, which were dispersed using tear-gas, rubber bullets and water cannons, Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili imposed a state of emergency on the country on 7 November. He blamed Russian agents for inciting the protests, and expelled some Russian embassy officials. A few days later, President Saakashvili announced early presidential elections for 5 January, 2008, which was one of the key demands of the opposition. He has also lifted the state of emergency on 16 November.

Political developments

The House welcomed the announcement of early elections, and "calls upon the Georgian authorities to ensure free and fair elections," with "impartial access to the media during the election campaign." MEPs also call on "all parties to show openness and restraint, tone down statements and engage in a constructive and fruitful dialogue aimed at supporting and consolidating Georgia's fragile democratic institutions." Finally, the Parliament encourages all Georgian political forces to start a debate that could lead to a more open public discussion about the pressing issue of the country, such as: 'the Russian factor' in Georgian politics, the fate of frozen conflicts, and the social implications of economic reforms.

Russia

The resolution also considers that "the EU must adopt a more resolute stance on crucial issues in the region and become more deeply involved, despite Russia's current negative attitude towards the EU's role in their common neighbourhood," and underlines that "in the end, it is up to the Russian authorities to understand that it is not so much geopolitical rivalry with the EU that diminishes Russian influence in its neighbourhood, but Russia's own approach to some of its neighbours."

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-14068-332-11-48-903-20071128IPR14043-28-11-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST

Middle East

- ▶ **Summary of remarks by Javier Solana on the occasion of the Annapolis conference (27/11/2007)**

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), participated in the Annapolis Conference on the Middle East during which he made the following remarks: "I am very pleased to be here today. I would like to thank the efforts of President Bush and the determination of Secretary Rice, and to pay tribute to the courage of President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert in achieving this moment of hope and opportunity. Agreement of the parties to launch final status negotiations with the aim of completing these by the end of 2008 is a remarkable achievement.

This is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss. Now is the moment for all of us to step up and take our responsibilities. I have been very closely involved in previous attempts to achieve peace between Palestinians and Israel. We must learn from past disappointments. Time is not on our side. Ultimately, it is up to the two parties to make this process work. But the sustained support and involvement of the international community will be essential in order to create the momentum to keep today's achievements on track and avoid them being blown off course by occasional crises.

(..)

The European Union looks forward to being closely involved in all aspects of the post-Annapolis period. The EU is also ready to accompany this new momentum in a determined fashion:

- through our role in the Quartet;

- through the deployment of EU missions on the ground;

- through our position as the largest donor to the Palestinians;

- and through the constructive involvement of many of our Member States.

The EU is prepared not only to continue its involvement, but to shape it and step it up in support of a new, substantive and credible process. To this end, the EU has approved a plan designed to make the EU's role more creative, more positive and more ambitious as engagement between the parties deepens and starts to deliver results.

The EU Action Plan addresses both short-term and long-term issues. Our short-term aim is to help address security and law and order, allowing greater freedom of movement for people and goods, and leading to increased economic activity. This would be complemented by technical assistance to economic and fiscal governance and assistance to the private sector.

In the longer-term, our plan would address broader capacity building in order to support the transition from rehabilitation to post-conflict development. We are also looking at the potential EU contribution to the resolution of final status issues.

The forthcoming donors' conference in Paris is also a vital part of the next steps that will have to be taken if we want to keep up the momentum. It is crucial to the implementation of Prime Minister Fayyad's Reform and Development Plan, and also to the credibility and sustainability of the political process as a whole. The EU is committed to the success of the Paris Conference where we will be outlining our future support for the Palestinians.

We particularly welcome the decision of the Arab League countries to support this meeting and to attend at ministerial level. Through their decision to relaunch the Arab Peace Initiative and through their support for President Abbas, they have played a central role in bringing us all here today.

The Arab partners will also play a vital role in the achievement of peace between Israelis and Palestinians as a first step towards a comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

We look forward to staying in close touch with Arab partners in the post-Annapolis phase including through regular meetings of the Quartet with the Arab League follow-up committee."

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/EN/declarations/97295.pdf

Middle East

► **EU Presidency Statement on the Annapolis conference** (27/11/2007)

(..)

The Annapolis conference represents a turning point for regional and international partners to effectively support a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and, in this context the EU Presidency welcomes the wide and broad participation of key international actors, in particular the presence of the members of the Arab League follow-up Committee.

The EU Presidency reiterates the European Union's active role, notably in the framework of increased Quartet engagement, in promoting efforts to contribute to the gradual resumption of a sustainable political process aiming at successful negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians.

A solution to the Israeli-Arab conflict is essential for the security and stability in the region and will have a far reaching positive impact.

The Presidency reaffirms the EU's determination to support the efforts of reaching comprehensive peace in the Middle East through a lasting and just settlement of the conflict, based on the principle of land for peace.

relevant UNSC resolutions, the Arab Peace Initiative, the Roadmap and previous agreements reached between the parties.

Recognizing the importance to continue supporting the process set in motion by Annapolis, in particular between the parties in their ongoing negotiations and subsequent implementation, the EU stands ready to offer a wide-ranging and coherent contribution as highlighted in its "Statebuilding for Peace in the Middle East: an EU Action Strategy".

The Presidency reiterates the EU's engagement to further strengthen its ongoing programs to foster the economic and financial development of a future Palestinian State through the continuation of assistance and in close cooperation with the Quartet Representative. In this regard, it emphasizes the importance of the Paris Donors' Conference, in December, which represents an essential complement to the political process launched in Annapolis.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/Declaracoes_PESC/20071127annapolis.htm

THEMATIC :

FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

EXTERNAL RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT-RELATED ISSUES

EU / UN REFORM

MISCELLANEOUS

Debate on the priorities of European justice

- ▶ **Fight against terrorism, child protection and electronic justice: debate on the priorities of European Justice** (27/11/2007)

Justice Minister Alberto Costa convened with the Commission's vice-president, Franco Frattini, with ministers from several Member States and with the president of the European Parliament's Commission on Legal Affairs, on the first meeting of the «Future Group» in the area of Justice.

On 26 and 27 November, in Guincho, Cascais, the first meeting with members of government of the so-called «Future Group» in the area of Justice was held, under the initiative of the Portuguese presidency of the European Union.

The objective of this meeting, as well as the objective of this informal work group, is to start the preparation of priorities and measures of the European Union, in the area of Justice, for the next years.

In 2009, a five year work programme will be finalised, which was defined in The Hague in 2004, the so-called «The Hague Programme», and which contemplates a plan of community action in the area of Justice, both at a criminal justice and civil justice level.

The debate that was now initiated represents precisely the starting point for the construction of the future, with a new agenda for European Justice that will be already included in the new Treaty of Lisbon which, in the area of Justice, means significant changes. For example, the change in the rule on unanimous decision for the qualified majority or the much closer association of the European Parliament with the legislative procedure in the area of Criminal Justice.

Six themes that represent the great concerns of today's Europe and areas in which progress has to be made were discussed.

Fight against terrorism is an imperative which places permanent challenges to the European justice systems, which face the need to improve their intervention and cooperation capacities. These challenges are linked to the legislation of European States, to the training and work of magistrates and authorities that are responsible for trans-national investigations and judgements and to the capacity to prevent and repress, with the efficiency we all desire, without going beyond the borders of a democratic State.

Another area of discussion is child protection. It is our duty to protect future generations, those who fortunately only know a Europe that is united and peaceful, especially when considering the globalisation of threats they now have to face.

Electronic justice was also discussed, the only justice for the future, since we are undergoing a transformation process of the working methods and facing the enlargement of cooperation possibilities, which are changing relations between citizens and businesses and the justice systems.

Another dimension that cannot be forgotten is **the protection of human rights**, the founding boundaries that define us as rule of law States and on which all citizens depend, and which the European integration must strengthen and never take for granted.

Besides these themes, the capacity of the European Union to improve its relations with other political systems, in the area of Justice, was also discussed, as well as issues of institutional functioning, particularly the question of how to improve the preparation of European legislation, and also ensuring more efficiency and more publicity of European law.

The general guidelines for action were enunciated, but also concrete measures that meet the needs of Europeans. For example, the creation of teams of rapid intervention with national anti-terrorism experts to give immediate investigation support or the creation of a European compensation fund for victims of terrorism and serious crimes; the most adequate means of protection against sexual delinquents and child abduction; or the possibility of starting judicial proceedings in a State of the European Union that is not the State of residency or where headquarters are located, through electronic means.

This group's work will continue throughout 2008 and these themes will be equally discussed with the other Member States of the Union, namely during the next Council for Justice and Internal Affairs, to be held on 6 and 7 December in Brussels.

http://www.eu2007.pt/UE/vEN/Noticias_Documentos/20071127GrupoFuturo.htm

EP approves the Charter of Fundamental Rights

- ▶ **European Parliament approves the Charter of Fundamental Rights and urges UK and Poland to apply it (29/11/2007)**

The European Parliament gave its assent to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union with 534 votes in favour 85 against and 21 abstentions. MEPs also adopted an amendment with 477 votes in favour, 106 against and 35 abstentions urging Poland and the United Kingdom to make every effort to arrive, after all, at a consensus on the unrestricted applicability of the Charter.

The UK has a special protocol on its application which makes clear that the Charter will not extend the powers of any court –UK or European – to strike down UK legislation. On Wednesday 12 December in Strasbourg, the European Parliament will hold a ceremony on the proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The Charter sets out in one place the rights which citizens across the EU already have, for example through the European Convention on Human Rights, or through existing EU law. Its aim is to ensure that EU institutions respect those fundamental rights. The Charter reaffirms existing rights and will apply to all Member States when they implement Union law.

UK and Poland position

There is a UK-specific protocol which makes clear that the Charter will: Not extend the powers of any court –UK or European – to strike down UK legislation; and - not create any new justifiable rights in the UK. For example, it will not create any greater social or economic rights than are already provided in UK law (the same applies to Poland).

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/017-14024-332-11-48-902-20071128IPR14000-28-11-2007-2007-true/default_en.htm

MEPs: "Fighting terrorism can never be an excuse to violate human rights"

- ▶ **Fighting terrorism can never be an excuse to violate human rights, say MEPs**
(30/11/2007)

Governments and EU institutions have often responded to terrorist attacks by adopting laws that have not been sufficiently discussed and some times in violation of basic human rights such as right to privacy or to a fair trial, says the Civil Liberties Committee in a draft resolution which analyses EU counter-terrorism policy. Members call for further scrutiny of intelligence operations and for more proportionate and evidence-based legislation in the future.

Analysing specific activities related to Europe's current counter-terrorism strategy - based on the goals of "prevention, protection, preparedness and response" - MEPs stressed the need for the Commission to carry out "an overall evaluation" on the effectiveness of legislation adopted, the degree of transposition by Member States, "and the positive and negative effects of these laws, both in terms of security and in terms of citizen's rights". Commissioner Frattini's recent proposals regarding the use of passenger name records (PNR) in Europe for law enforcement purposes and the directive on explosives will be assessed by Parliament "on an evidence based argumentation", say MEPs in the committee.

Avoid profiling

One of members' major concerns is the potential misuse by authorities of the personal information contained in numerous data bases - PNR, Eurodac, Schengen and Visa information systems - "to create profiles through data-mining techniques", which is not allowed at European level. MEPs in the committee said that profiling (the use of racial, ethnic or similar characteristics in determining whether a person is considered likely to commit a particular type of crime) should be avoided altogether and raised concerns in this regard on Mr Frattini's new proposal for an EU PNR system.

Democratic control of secret services

How can we avoid serious breaches of human rights in cases like the CIA illegal renditions in Europe? Although MEPs reiterate the importance of sharing intelligence information, both at EU level and among national secret services, further rules are needed to ensure the necessary democratic scrutiny and parliamentary control over their activities, the committee says.

Preventing radicalisation

The Committee believes that "cases such as the recent rejection of the US Supreme Court to deal with the Khalid Al-Masri complaint tend to reinforce the impression particularly by Muslim minorities in Europe that the anti-terror measures promulgate double standards". EU counter-terrorism policy should not only be based on police measures but should also support local actions aimed at "preventing violent radicalisation by fostering the integration of people through intercultural dialogue", says the committee. Measures are proposed to support democracy movements in Islamic countries, including the creation of more student exchanges and funding mass media stations which spread democratic ideas.

At the same time, staff involved in borders security and counter-terrorism activities should be trained about Islam, Muslim customs and Arabic languages, says the committee.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/031-13599-330-11-48-903-20071126IPR13592-26-11-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

Sakharov Prize

► **Salih Mahmoud Osman to receive Sakharov Prize in Strasbourg (03/12/2007)**

Sudanese human rights lawyer Salih Mahmoud Osman will receive this year's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought at a formal sitting of the European Parliament on Tuesday 11 December in Strasbourg.

Announcing Mr Osman as the winner on 25 October, European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering said "In the face of violence and arbitrary power, Mr Osman stands up for dialogue and justice. And there can be no democracy without justice. By granting the Sakharov Prize to Salih Mahmoud Osman, the European Parliament shows its support for the action of this courageous man who has become the voice of Darfur, and through him, for the establishment of the rule of law in Sudan".

Mr Osman is a lawyer who works with the Sudan Organisation Against Torture to provide legal assistance and other aid to victims of human rights abuses in Sudan. For over two decades he has provided free legal representation to people arbitrarily detained, tortured or otherwise abused in Sudan's various civil wars.

As violence in Darfur has worsened in recent years, he has worked to provide a record of the alleged war crimes in that region. He visits detainees and initiates legal action against human rights perpetrators. His interviews with witnesses and records of crime have been turned over to the International Criminal Court to assist the Court's prosecutions.

Mr Osman currently serves as a Member of the Sudan National Parliament, where he seeks to promote the rule of law through implementation of the interim constitution. His fight against injustice in Sudan has had a personal cost. Members of his own family have been killed, tortured or burned out of their homes by the militias. He himself was imprisoned by the Sudanese government for over seven months in 2004 without charge or a trial. Human Rights Watch has described Mr Osman as an "essential resource" for Darfurians facing persecution and a "thorn in the side of those who use violence to cling to power".

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