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- ◆ **EU- Croatia association Council**

- ◆ **EU- Turkey association Council**

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- ◆ **EU- Chili association Council**

THIRD COUNTRY MEETINGS

10 may 2005

- ◆ **EU-Russia summit**

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MEETINGS

21 – 24 February 2005

- ◆ **Plenary Session**

16 March 2005

17 March 2005

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

31 March 2005

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- ◆ **Subcommittee on Human Rights**

REGIONS:

AFRICA

◆ Darfur

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the report by the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur** (07.02.05)

1. The European Union welcomes the report, and in particular the recommendations, by the International Commission of Inquiry on Darfur, established under Security Council Resolution 1 64 (2004), which has just been submitted to the United Nations Secretary-General. The EU recalls that, from the outset, and in particular in the Council conclusions of 26 July 2004, it has stated its support for the establishment of this Commission of Inquiry.

2. The EU expresses its concern at the findings of the inquiry, which **attribute to the Government of Sudan and the Janjaweed responsibility for serious violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law, which could be qualified as crimes against humanity**. The EU notes that the Commission also found rebel forces to be responsible for committing acts which could be classified as **war crimes**. The EU is concerned at the fact that these attacks, which were noted throughout the inquiry, are continuing.

3. **The EU resolutely condemns these crimes and stresses the importance of putting an immediate end to impunity in Darfur**. The Commission of Inquiry recommends that those responsible should answer for their acts before the International Criminal Court. In this context, the EU reaffirms its constant support for the International Criminal Court, and reiterates its common position on the ICC, while noting that it is for the United Nations Security Council to take a rapid decision on this matter.

"The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Country Croatia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this declaration".

*Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process

http://ue.eu.int/cms3_applications/applications/newsroom/loadDocument.ASP?directory=en/cfsp/&fileName=83609.pdf (EN)

◆ Togo

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the political situation in Togo after the death of President Eyadema** (09.02.05)

The European Union has received news of the death of President Eyadema. It offers its sincere condolences to the President's family and to the Togolese people.

The European Union is following political developments in Togo with concern and supports the declarations made by the United Nations, the African Union and ECOWAS calling for the democratic process to be observed. The EU condemns any violation of the constitutional provisions governing the provisional exercise of power, which it regards as a coup d'état. It calls on all politicians and State institutions to work to ensure a peaceful transition towards a democratic system.

http://ue.eu.int/cms3_applications/applications/newsroom/loadDocument.ASP?directory=en/cfsp/&fileName=83642.pdf

AMERICAS

◆ Colombia

- ▶ EU HR Javier Solana to meet with the Colombian Minister for Defence, Mr Jorge Alberto URIBE ECHAVARRÍA (11.02.05)

Javier SOLANA, European Union High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), will meet Jorge Alberto URIBE ECCHAVARRÍA, the Minister for Defence of Colombia, on Friday 11 February 2005.

The meeting will provide an opportunity to exchange views on the **EU-Colombian relations**, in particular concerning **the fight against terrorism and illicit drug production and trafficking**. Another issue will be the **ongoing peace process with the illegal armed groups in Colombia**. The regional integration process of the Andean Community of Countries and the political and economic situation in the region.

http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/sg/83685.pdf (EN)

ASIA

◆ Malaysia

- ▶ Parliamentary questions - Subject: Rights of migrant workers in Malaysia and human rights defenders (11.02.05)

According to Amnesty International, **Irene Fernandez**, whose organisation **Tenaganita** peacefully promotes the rights of migrant workers in Malaysia, has been given a **suspended 12 month imprisonment and civil rights restricted** on a **charge of 'maliciously publishing false news'** after Tenaganita reported on **allegations of mistreatment of undocumented migrant workers in Malaysian detention centres**. Amnesty International considers her a human rights defender, and, if she is imprisoned, a prisoner of conscience.

What steps is the Council Presidency taking to secure Irene Fernandez's freedom and ensure the human rights of migrants and of human rights defenders in Malaysia are protected?

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=QT&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+QT+H-2005-0102+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

◆ Cambodia

- ▶ Déclaration de la Présidence au nom de l'Union européenne suite à la levée de l'immunité parlementaire de trois membres de l'opposition au Cambodge (10.02.05)

L'Union européenne, amie et partenaire du Royaume du Cambodge, exprime la préoccupation que lui cause la situation politique actuelle, caractérisée notamment par la multiplication des actions en justice intentées par les responsables politiques les uns contre les autres, par **la suspension récente de l'immunité de trois parlementaires de l'opposition et l'arrestation d'un de ces trois parlementaires**.

Cette situation ne lui paraît pas propice à un fonctionnement équilibré des institutions, au respect des droits de l'opposition démocratique, à la réconciliation nationale et au redressement du pays engagé dans la construction d'un Etat de droit.

L'Union européenne fait appel aux dirigeants de tous les partis politiques à travailler ensemble dans un esprit de responsabilité et de concorde dans l'intérêt de tous les Cambodgiens.

L'Union européenne va continuer à suivre la situation.

<http://www.eu2005.lu/fr/actualites/pesc/2005/02/10cambodge/index.html> (FR)

◆ China

- ▶ EU set to lift China arms embargo despite US concerns By Honor Mahony (10.02.05)

The European Union on Wednesday (9 February) indicated that it would go ahead and lift its arms embargo on China despite repeatedly expressed concerns by the US.

"The European Union is moving to lift the arms embargo. The European Union cannot be accused of rushing into this", said European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

"All we can ask is that the European Union is aware of our concerns, understands them fully and takes them fully into consideration", she added.

The EU is set to lift its embargo within the first half of this year but is in the process of making a general code of conduct on arms sales stricter.

<http://euobserver.com/?aid=18375&rk=1> (EN)

EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE) AND CIS

◆ Azerbaijan

- ▶ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on Azerbaijan (11.02.05)

The European Union wishes to express its concern following the conclusions of the **OSCE report on trial monitoring in Azerbaijan**, which was published on 4 February 2005. The report shows that in some important respects **trials fell well short of Azerbaijan's existing legal requirements and its international commitments on human rights and rule of law.**

Of particular concern are the **extensive, credible allegations of torture and ill-treatment of detainees, the absence of adequate legal action or remedies in the face of these serious allegations and the acceptance by the courts of evidence said to have been obtained by torture and coercion.**

The European Union calls on the Government of Azerbaijan to undertake a **wide-ranging and independent inquiry into the allegations of torture and ill-treatment** as soon as possible. It also calls for **publication of the results of the investigation into the excessive use of force by the security forces during the post-election disturbances on 16 October 2003.**

http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/cfsp/83698.pdf (EN)

◆ Turkey

- ▶ Parliamentary questions - Subject: Turkish teachers' union Egitim Sen (07.02.05)

The Turkish teachers' union Egitim Sen is under threat of being disbanded. The union is accused of jeopardising the unity of the republic because it supports the **right of children to be taught about and in their mother tongue.** The public prosecutor has taken the case to the Supreme Court. The Court hearings were scheduled to take place in November 2004 but the judge adjourned the case until 21 February 2005. The prosecution of Egitim Sen raises the question of whether laws which allow scope for such application are consistent with freedom of association and other trade union freedoms and rights.

What measures and pressure will the Commission bring to bear on Turkey to ensure that trade union rights are respected and protected in Turkey?

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=QT&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+QT+H-2005-0057+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

◆ North Caucasus/Russia

- ▶ Council of Europe Anti-Torture Committee discusses situation in the North Caucasian region with the Russian authorities (01.02.05)

Representatives of the **European Committee for the prevention of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (CPT)** had talks last week in Moscow and Rostov-on-Don with senior Russian officials. The talks, held from 26 to 28 January 2005, focussed on the **CPT's findings during its most recent visit to the North Caucasian region**, which was organised from 24 November to 1 December and covered **places of deprivation of liberty in the Chechen Republic and Ingushetia**.

The CPT's representatives had discussions with Dmitri KOZAK, Plenipotentiary Representative of the President of the Russian Federation in the Southern Federal District, Sergei SHCHADRIN, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Yuri YALUNIN, Deputy Minister of Justice, Alexander SAVENKOV, Chief Military Prosecutor, Alexei KUZUYURA, Head of the International Relations Department in the Federal Security Service, and Vladimir PARSHIKOV, Director of the Department for International Humanitarian Cooperation and Human Rights in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They also met Vladimir LUKIN, Commissioner on Human Rights of the Russian Federation.

The CPT's representatives were Silvia CASALE, President of the CPT, Mauro PALMA and Jean-Pierre RESTELLINI, members of the CPT in respect of Italy and Switzerland, together with Trevor STEVENS (Executive Secretary) and Petya NESTOROVA (Head of Unit) of the Committee's Secretariat.

<http://www.cpt.coe.int/documents/rus/2005-02-01-eng.htm> (EN)

◆ **Russia**

- ▶ **Le partenariat stratégique UE-Russie au centre de la rencontre Asselborn-Lavrov à Moscou** (09.02.05)

Jean Asselborn, ministre des Affaires étrangères et président en exercice du Conseil de l'Union européenne, a rencontré le ministre des Affaires étrangères de la Fédération russe, Sergej Lavrov, le 9 février 2005 à Moscou.

A côté des relations bilatérales, les pourparlers ont porté sur le partenariat stratégique entre l'Union européenne et la Russie et les priorités de la Présidence luxembourgeoise en matière de politique extérieure et de sécurité commune.

Le ministre Asselborn a signalé que **la Présidence chercherait à renforcer le partenariat stratégique entre l'UE et la Russie** au cours des prochains mois: "Le but principal de notre Présidence sera bien évidemment l'adoption des feuilles de route pour les quatre espaces en cours de négociation." (*) (...)

(...) Pour ce qui est **des consultations sur les droits de l'homme - y compris les droits des minorités** - et les libertés fondamentales, Jean Asselborn a salué l'accord trouvé sur la mise en place d'**un dialogue permanent entre la Russie et l'Union européenne à ce sujet**. Le ministre Lavrov a confirmé **la participation de la Russie dans des consultations conjointes**, qui selon Jean Asselborn "devraient avoir lieu **deux fois par an**, et au cours desquelles **toutes les questions concernant les droits de l'homme et les libertés fondamentales pourront être soulevées**. Les premières consultations devront avoir lieu à Luxembourg le 1er mars prochain."

Jean Asselborn a également fait part de la préoccupation de l'Union européenne concernant l'enlèvement en République tchétchène de Makhmut Magomadov, expert en droits de l'homme qui travaillait sur un projet co-financé par l'Initiative européenne pour la démocratie et les droits de l'homme, et exprimé son souhait que les autorités russes mettent tout en œuvre pour que M. Magomadov soit retrouvé le plus rapidement possible.

** Au sommet UE-Russie de Saint Pétersbourg en mai 2003, l'Union européenne et la Russie avaient convenu d'intensifier leur coopération stratégique dans quatre domaines (communément appelés les "quatre espaces"): l'économie, la sécurité et la justice, la sécurité extérieure, et la recherche et l'éducation. A travers la création de ces espaces communs, l'Union et la Russie seront à même de coopérer plus étroitement sur des sujets d'un intérêt commun et les questions transfrontalières.*
<http://www.eu2005.lu/fr/actualites/communiqués/2005/02/0902AsselbornLavrov/index.html> (FR)

◆ **Moldavia**

- ▶ **Déclaration de la présidence au nom de l'Union européenne concernant les élections parlementaires en Moldavie** (09.02.05)

L'Union européenne attache une grande importance à ses relations avec la République de Moldavie comme en témoigne le **Plan d'Action**, récemment agréé dans le cadre de la Politique Européenne de Voisinage. Le Plan sera soumis au Conseil de Coopération UE-Moldavie le 22 février pour approbation.

Le niveau d'ambition des relations entre l'Union européenne et la Moldova sera fonction de **l'engagement de la République de Moldova en faveur des valeurs communes**. Il n'est donc que normal que l'Union européenne suive de près le processus électoral en cours en Moldova. **L'Union européenne lance un appel aux autorités moldaves afin que les élections parlementaires de mars 2005 se déroulent dans un climat ouvert et équitable, avec une couverture médiatique pluraliste et impartiale de la campagne et dans le respect de la neutralité de l'administration de l'Etat envers tous les candidats et leurs sympathisants**. L'Union européenne appelle l'administration moldave à veiller à ce que les votes des expatriés seront traités de manière adéquate et impartiale. **La campagne électorale et les élections devront se dérouler dans le respect des normes démocratiques et en conformité avec les critères du Conseil de l'Europe et de l'OSCE**.

Dans ce contexte, l'UE appelle également le gouvernement de Moldova à tenir compte des préoccupations identifiées par la **Mission d'Evaluation des Besoins de l'OSCE** et à mettre en oeuvre les recommandations conjointes établies par l'OSCE et la Commission de Venise en juin 2004.

L'Union européenne se félicite de l'invitation des autorités moldaves à accueillir des **observateurs internationaux** en vue des élections parlementaires. Les Etats membres et la Commission se disent prêts à apporter une contribution adéquate. L'UE espère que les autorités moldaves répondront également favorablement à la volonté de la société civile moldave de contribuer à l'observation des élections.

<http://www.eu2005.lu/fr/actualites/pesc/2005/02/09moldavie/index.html> (FR)

◆ Western Balkans

▶ Western Balkans: many problems still unsolved previous (10.02.05)

Seriously concerned at the economic and social situation in the Western Balkans, **Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee is calling on the EU to adopt a clearer strategy for the Balkans and provide a step-by-step integration agenda**. In a draft resolution adopted unanimously on Wednesday, MEPs also called on the Western Balkan countries themselves to coordinate their regional infrastructure better. And they stressed that these countries could facilitate EU integration more by fulfilling certain conditions, such as **cooperating with the International Criminal Tribunal on Yugoslavia in The Hague, favouring the return of refugees, actively fighting corruption and organised crime and respecting human and minority rights**.

As regards Bosnia-Herzegovina, MEPs were worried about the continuing serious political problems and the country's precarious stability. They called for a quick handover of Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic to the Hague tribunal. Turning to Serbia and Montenegro, MEPs said that the next two years will be crucial for finding a mutually satisfactory solution to problems with the State Union. They also recognised that future decisions on the status of Kosovo will have political implications for Serbia, for which reason Belgrade and Priština should engage in a cooperative dialogue. In that respect, they referred to the upcoming review of the Kosovo "standards" - the state of the rule of law, the return of refugees, property rights, a functioning economy - which may lead to opening discussions on the status of Kosovo.

Albania caused MEPs concern as regards its political climate, its administrative capacity, the **need to fight corruption and organised crime and to improve the judicial system, respect for minorities, such as the Greek community, and the economy**. The failure of the referendum in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on a territorial division of the country would seem to have paved the way for reconciliation between the two main ethnic groups. Efforts to decentralise should be backed up by EU support programmes, says the resolution.

MEPs said they were looking forward to the opening of **accession negotiations with Croatia**, but that the date of accession should not be linked to that of any other country. Croatia **should cooperate fully with the tribunal in The Hague, settle its border disputes with Slovenia, make greater efforts to facilitate the return of refugees and guarantee fair and effective domestic war-crime trials**.

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/sipade2?PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+PRESS+NR-20050203-1+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&LEVEL=4&NAV=S#SECTION6> (EN)

◆ Middle East

- ▶ Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner announces €250 million support to the Palestinians in 2005 (09.02.05)

Following her visit to the Middle East 6-8 February, and the Ceasefire Declaration made by the Israelis and Palestinians at Sharm el Sheikh, the Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy Benita Ferrero-Waldner has announced the European Commission expects **to make around €250 million available in 2005 to support further steps towards the creation of a viable Palestinian state**. Part of this allocation may be used to help rebuild shattered infrastructure.

Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner said: "We will continue to be a major provider of political and financial support to the peace process. Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner discussed with Israeli and Palestinian partners during her Middle East trip future European assistance, stressing that the EU can only help if the conditions are in place for such help to be sustainable. She underlined the **importance of access for aid workers and freedom of movement for Palestinian persons and goods to help relaunch the Palestinian economy**."

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/05/157&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guilanguage=en> (EN)

THEMATIC

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

◆ Women

- ▶ Parliamentary questions (08.02.05)

On 18 May 2000, the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the follow up to the Beijing Action Platform(1). In the light of this resolution and of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action:

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: Does the Council intend to designate 2006 as the European Year against violence against women, as repeatedly requested by the European Parliament? Does the Council consider that there is any **connection between prostitution and trafficking**, and what **measures** will be taken to combat trafficking in human beings?

WOMEN AND POVERTY: In order to pursue a more concerted policy in the field of social protection, does the Council intend to adopt **gender-specific indicators related to the feminisation of poverty**?

THE GIRL CHILD: Alongside the Daphne programme, what measures will the Council be taking so as to eradicate the sexual exploitation of children and women (trafficking, sex-tourism), in both internal and external policy, including asylum rights for victims?

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: In the setting up of the new EU Human Rights Agency, how will the Council implement a gender-sensitive approach to **human rights policies in order to highlight the particular human rights violations suffered by women**?

WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICTS: In its resolution on the participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution, the European Parliament called for a quota of 40% women as regards participation in reconciliation, peace-keeping, and conflict prevention posts, including fact-finding and observer missions, acting on behalf of the EU and its Member States. Is that quota being maintained?

<http://www2.europarl.eu.int/omk/OM-Europarl?PROG=OQ&L=EN&PUBREF=-//EP//TEXT+OQ+O-2005-0006+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN> (EN)

◆ Terrorism

- ▶ Luc Frieden rencontre Alberto Gonzales (08.02.05)

Quelques heures après avoir été assermenté comme nouveau ministre de la Justice des Etats-Unis d'Amérique, Alberto Gonzales a reçu vendredi le 4 février 2005 à Washington comme premier hôte étranger le ministre luxembourgeois de la Justice Luc Frieden, président en exercice du Conseil des ministres de la Justice de l'Union européenne.

Lors de cette entrevue, les deux ministres ont souligné l'**importance des relations entre l'Union européenne et les Etats-Unis dans le domaine de la lutte contre la criminalité et le terrorisme** et ont exprimé leur **ferme volonté de coopérer étroitement pour renforcer la coopération transatlantique dans le domaine de la justice** durant la Présidence luxembourgeoise du Conseil de l'Union européenne.

Alberto Gonzales a officiellement pris ses fonctions de ministre américain de la Justice jeudi soir après avoir été assermenté comme 80e Attorney General des Etats-Unis.

<http://www.eu2005.lu/fr/actualites/communiqués/2005/02/0802friedengonzales/index.html> (FR)

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

◆ Human Rights

- ▶ **EU discouraged from further overlap in human rights monitoring** By Lucia Kubosova (07.02.2005)

The Council of Europe is set to call on EU leaders to prevent a further overlap of human rights monitoring by adding a new agency to the long list of existing organisations.

Plans to set up a European Agency on Fundamental Rights have caused concerns over duplication in the human rights and democracy fields, the Financial Times reports.

Commenting on the proposed agency, Terry Davis, secretary-general of the Strasbourg-based Council of Europe said that "with all the best will in the world, I can't understand what it is going to do".

Instead, Mr Davis is planning to suggest to the European leaders that a merger between the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) should be considered.

He argues that the observers from the two bodies experienced some tensions on the ground when monitoring elections in Ukraine and Georgia, which should trigger questions of the long term need for both organisations.

"There is a tremendous overlap between the EU, OSCE and the Council of Europe", he said and added that "sometimes it's good to work together, but sometimes it's a cop-out, because governments don't want to choose who does what", according to the FT.

However, exactly how the merger between the Council of Europe and the OSCE should be worked out remains unanswered, **as OSCE officials responded coldly to the idea and suggested that the two organisations have different objectives.**

The Council of Europe, set up in 1949, has the advantage of the oldest human rights monitoring body and includes all 46 European countries, except for Belarus.

The Vienna-based OSCE was created as a predominantly security-related body in 1971 and covers 55 states, including the US, Canada and central Asian states.

The budgets of the two organisations are around €180m.

<http://www.euobserver.com/?sid=9&aid=18347> (EN)

- ▶ **Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP, met today Mr. Alvaro Gil-Robles the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights** (11.02.2005)

Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), met today with the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Alvaro Gil-Robles. Mr. Michael Matthiessen, recently appointed Personal Representative of the HR for Human Rights, also participated in the meeting.

The meeting was a **good opportunity to discuss issues linked to Human Rights and possibilities for enhanced cooperation in this field between the European Union and the Council of Europe.** In this context Mr. Gil-Robles, who is the first Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, welcomed the **recent decision within the European Union to appoint a Personal Representative of the HR for Human Rights in the field of CFSP.** Mr. Gil-Robles also briefed the HR Solana on his recent visit to Moscow."

http://ue.eu.int/uedocs/cms_Data/docs/pressdata/en/declarations/83695.pdf (EN)