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## REGIONS:

### AFRICA

### AMERICAS

#### USA

##### ► **EU-USA Summit** (30/04/2007)

The annual EU-USA Summit took place in Washington on 30 April. The meeting focused on strengthening transatlantic economic integration, the main theme were the harmonization of the two economic areas' regulations and standards. A framework agreement was signed on this issue. In addition, **a joint statement on promoting peace, human rights and democracy worldwide was signed** together with a joint statement on energy and climate protection.

The documents are available at:

<http://www.EU2007.de>

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/Meetings\\_Calendar/Dates/April/0430-RAA1.html?](http://www.eu2007.de/en/Meetings_Calendar/Dates/April/0430-RAA1.html?)

### ASIA

### EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE ) AND CIS

#### Turkey

##### ► **EU Presidency statement on the presidential elections in Turkey** (28/04/2007)

The Presidency of the European Union is closely following developments in Turkey after the first round of the presidential elections.

It expects all those responsible in the political sphere to play their part in ensuring that the presidential elections are carried out in accordance with the principles of democracy and the rule of law laid down in the constitution.

The Presidency considers it particularly important that the elections and the Constitutional Court should not be influenced by external pressure.

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP\\_Statements/April/0428Tuerkei.html](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/April/0428Tuerkei.html)

#### Uzbekistan

##### ► **Human Rights in Uzbekistan: no progress** (03/05/2007)

In October 2005, the EU Council of Ministers adopted sanctions against Uzbekistan, a result of the Tashkent government's role in the killing of hundreds of people in of the city of Andijan in May 2005. Two weeks from now, the Council will meet to review these sanctions and to decide whether or not to lift them. Ahead of this decision, the Human Rights Subcommittee met on Tuesday and heard a range of views on the best way to proceed.

As Subcommittee Chair H el ene Flautre (Greens/EFA, FR) put it in opening the meeting, there has been "no headway", neither in Tashkent's investigations of the Andijan massacre, nor in the case of Umida Niyazova, a Human Rights Watch translator recently sentenced to seven years in prison for alleged anti-government activities. According to Martin Callanan (EPP-ED, UK), a recent participant in

the EU-Uzbekistan Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, “Uzbekistan is the most repressive of the Central Asian states, [...] with the possible exception of Turkmenistan.”

However, “the isolation of Uzbekistan”, argued Rolf Schulze, speaking on behalf of the German Presidency, “is not an option.” Even if Member States might not be of one mind “as to how one should proceed with the sanctions”, he said, the EU should strive to have an institutionalised human rights dialogue with Central Asian countries, Uzbekistan included. **The human rights dialogue with Tashkent, he noted, was opened by the Council last month.** Acknowledging – in response to a question by Sarah Ludford (ALDE, UK) – that certain economic and energy interests were at stake in the EU’s relationship with Uzbekistan, Mr Schulze insisted, nonetheless, **that there should be no trade-off between human rights and other issues.**

**Lotte Leicht, of Human Rights Watch, warned against any lifting of sanctions.** “It is our view,” she said, that “it would be clear-cut nonsense” to lift or lighten the sanctions without seeing tangible movement on human rights from Tashkent – notably, as concerns the fate of human rights defenders currently jailed in Uzbekistan. **We respect dialogue, she added, “but it must be result-oriented”.** There is a threat – said Neil Melvin, of the Centre for European Policy Studies – that by engaging with Uzbekistan the EU will become “complicit” in Tashkent’s domestic policies and that the Union “will be discredited by such a strategy.

**Rolf Timans, from the European Commission, was sceptical of the idea of making the release of political prisoners a precondition for engaging with Uzbekistan.** “One has to be realistic”, he said. “This is only the first round [of the human rights dialogue]” – one should not expect that the Uzbek authorities will release such prisoners overnight. We have to start discussing human rights first, he added; “let’s not expect that the results will be forthcoming immediately.”

Mrs Flautre (Verts/ALE, FR) took issue with such reasoning. “I hope that there are no Uzbek officials in the room”, she remarked. “Your words”, she added, addressing Mr Timans, “suggest that they [the Uzbek authorities] hardly need to make an effort.” Mrs Lichte then reiterated her plea. It is “not enough” for the EU to “express concern”, she argued: the Union must “demand” the release of the human rights defenders unjustly held by the Uzbek government.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/015-6209-122-05-18-902-20070430IPR06169-02-05-2007-2007-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/015-6209-122-05-18-902-20070430IPR06169-02-05-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm)

## **Uzbekistan**

**►Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the sentences issued against Gulbahor Turaeva and Umida Niazova in Uzbekistan (04/05/2007)**

**The European Union has learned with great concern about the harsh sentences of six respectively seven years in prison passed on 24 April and 1 May 2007 to Ms. Gulbahor Turaeva and Ms. Umida Niazova.** The EU also deplores the fact that international observers were not allowed to observe the trial despite previous requests.

**Reiterating its concern about the situation of human rights defenders in Uzbekistan the EU urges the Uzbek authorities to immediately review the two cases and to fully respect the principles of due and fair trial according to Uzbekistan’s commitments to international human rights standards. The EU calls on the Uzbek authorities to grant unhindered access to both women by family and lawyers.**

The two sentences send a worrying signal by Uzbekistan in the perspective of a EU decision on whether to renew specific sanctions adopted in 2005 in relation to the Andijan tragedy and while Uzbekistan has agreed to hold a dialogue with the EU on human rights.

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/cfsp/93952.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/cfsp/93952.pdf)

## Russia

### ► EU Presidency Statement on the situation in front of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow (02/05/2007)

The Presidency of the European Union is gravely concerned about current developments in relations between Estonia, a Member State of the European Union, and the Russian Federation. At the present time the situation of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow gives cause for concern.

The Presidency of the European Union strongly urges the Russian Federation to comply with its international obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and protect the staff and premises of the Estonian mission and ensure unimpeded access to it.

In talks with all parties the Presidency is endeavouring to help de-escalate the situation.

Given the emotionally charged atmosphere surrounding the Soviet war graves in Estonia, it would be advisable to have a dispassionate dialogue on the matter. The Presidency of the European Union strongly urges that the problems that have arisen should be addressed in a spirit of understanding and mutual respect.

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP\\_Statements/May/0502BoEstland.html](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/May/0502BoEstland.html)

## Russia

### ► EU and Russia hold the fifth round of their Human Rights Consultations (04/05/2007)

The European Union and the Russian Federation held the fifth round of their intergovernmental Consultations on human rights issues yesterday (3 May).

The meeting, which took place in an open and constructive atmosphere, covered the human rights situation in the EU and Russia as well as issues relating to the international protection of human rights.

At yesterday's meeting, the EU raised a number of specific concerns about the human rights situation in Russia, in particular regarding **freedom of opinion 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 **Chechnya**. The two sides also discussed the issue of **combating torture and maltreatment**.

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 with UN human rights special procedures. Cooperation within the Council of Europe, e.g. on the implementation of its decisions and recommendations, including judgements of the European Court of Human Rights, was likewise discussed.

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 German Presidency by Günter Nooke, Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid at the Federal Foreign Office. Riina

Kionka, the Personal Representative of the EU High Representative Javier Solana for Human Rights, Gunnar Wiegand, acting head of the European Commission Directorate for Eastern Europe, the Southern Caucasus and Central Asian Republics, and Susana Vaz Patto, head of the human rights section of the forthcoming Portuguese 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 in Russia under the Portuguese EU Presidency.

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Press\\_Releases/May/0504AAMenschrechteEU\\_RUS.html](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Press_Releases/May/0504AAMenschrechteEU_RUS.html)

## MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST

### Iraq

- ▶ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on the launching of the International Compact with Iraq (03/05/2007).

The European Union warmly welcomes the launching of the International Compact with Iraq in Sharm El Sheikh on 3 May 2007. It reaffirms its strong support for the democratically-elected Government of Iraq and the Iraqi people in the challenging circumstances facing the country, and for their efforts to bring peace, security, stability and prosperity to an independent, unified, democratic, federal and sovereign Iraq founded on the principles of freedom and equality. It encourages the Iraqi Government to continue its efforts to promote national reconciliation, rule of law and restoration of public order, and reiterates its support for these efforts. It notes the responsibility of the international community, and in particular the States in the region, to support and promote these efforts. It commends the Iraqi Government for the ambitious commitments it has made in this Compact for promoting reforms in political, security, economic and social fields and underlines its appreciation for the assistance by the UN to Iraq in the Compact process. The implementation of these commitments will be central in developing cooperation between Iraq and all its international partners. Progress towards these targets will help to further enhance the EU's engagement with Iraq. The EU reaffirms its strong support for a central role of the UN in Iraq.

The EU is ready to continue to develop a close co-operation and partnership with Iraq in accordance with the priorities indicated in the International Compact and Iraq's National Development Strategy. Our main objective is to help Iraq implement the ambitious programme set out in the Compact and ensure that all Iraqis can benefit from Iraq's resources. The EU underlines the importance it attaches to Iraqi leadership, ownership and inclusiveness of the Compact process, and to the broad involvement of the international community, including the active participation of Iraq's neighbours and partners in the region.

The EU warmly welcomes the opening of negotiations on a Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Iraq and looks forward to timely continuation of these negotiations and the establishment of a close contractual relationship.

With reference to the Compact priorities the EU intends to:

Endorse a model of democratic government that overcomes divisions by supporting initiatives to advance national reconciliation, the constitutional review, the holding of local elections and

by providing capacity building support to the Council of Representatives. Specific attention will be paid to the promotion and protection of human rights.

**Contribute to strengthening the rule of law and to promoting human rights inter alia through capacity building initiatives such as the Integrated Rule of Law Mission EUJUST LEX.**

Establish contractual relations for the first time through the negotiation of a Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

Advance political dialogue with Iraq at all levels, in continuation of the September 2005 political dialogue Declaration between the EU and Iraq.

Deliver assistance on the basis of mutual commitments.

Continue support to the Iraqi people through assisting Iraqi authorities in improving the delivery of basic services, in alleviating their daily difficulties and in enhancing human development.

Help strengthen administrative capacities through promoting the development of an effective and transparent administrative framework at central and local levels.

Support economic integration of Iraq through the negotiation and conclusion of a Trade and Cooperation Agreement, the implementation of GSP preferences, support for Iraqi WTO accession and targeted technical assistance in areas related to economic recovery.

Support the establishment of a comprehensive approach towards the dire situation of refugees in Iraq and in the neighbouring regions, building on the outcome of the International Conference in Geneva on 17/18 April 2007.

The overall financial assistance by the European Community and EU Member States since 2003 has amounted to 14,2 billion euros (including grants, debt relief and loans). European financial assistance in 2007 is anticipated to reach 1,8 billion euros (including grants, debt relief and loans).

The EU looks forward to close cooperation with the Iraqi Government and its international partners in advancing the Government's programme based on the commitments made.

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP\\_Statements/May/0503Iraq.html](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/May/0503Iraq.html)

**THEMATIC :**



## FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES

## JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

## EXTERNAL RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT-RELATED ISSUES

### European Parliament

#### ► Human rights and wrongs: MEPs look back over 2006 (02/05/2007)

Last week the European Parliament adopted its annual report on human rights in the world. The situation in Darfur, China and Russia receive special attention in the 2006 report. In particular Moscow's actions to restrict NGOs come in for criticism, while MEPs want trade with China made "contingent" on human rights reform. It also criticised the EU for not doing enough to make the Sudanese government accept an international peacekeeping force in Darfur.

The report - drafted by Irish European People's Party member Simon Coveney - looks at the human rights activities of the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament. It identifies offenders, assesses EU actions and makes recommendations. Below is an overview of some of the key points.

#### **Darfur: Peacekeeping force and no-fly zone needed**

MEPs would like to see the EU taking more "unilateral action" to get the government of Sudan to accept a peacekeeping force. They also strongly back a no-fly zone and "targeted sanctions" should the regime not comply with the demands of the international community.

As well as a challenge for the EU - Mr Coveney also sees the crisis there as an "acid test" for the UN's new Human Rights Council. The council has replaced the controversial Human Rights Commission whose members were themselves violators of human rights. Speaking before the debate, French Green MEP H  l  ne Flautre told a press conference that "we are concerned about the efficiency and credibility of UNHRC".

#### **China: "serious concerns" remain**

The report expresses serious concern about the number of executions in China and MEPs say the EU's human rights dialogue with Beijing needs to be improved. According to the report, the Union should "raise the question of Tibet" and make the growing trade relationship between the two sides contingent on human rights guarantees.

It also comments on the "deterioration of the human rights situation" in Iran and calls on the Council of Ministers to raise the issue during any contacts with Tehran.

#### **Russia: restrictions on NGOs criticised**

The Russian government came in for strong criticism, especially regarding new legislation to restrict the activities of NGOs and threats to "journalists and human rights defenders". The murders of two vocal critics of the Kremlin in the last year - Anna Politkovskaya and Alexander Litvinenko - were also mentioned. For Mrs Politkovskaya the report is "appalled" at the murder and calls for greater protection of journalists whilst for Mr Litvinenko it says it is "concerned about allegations of Russian involvement". The Coveney report is stark in its appraisal of the EU's influence on Russia saying it has only had "limited success" in bring about policy change. It calls for a human rights clause with clearer obligations on Russia to be inserted into a new Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and Russia. This agreement is currently stalled in a dispute over Polish meat exports.

#### **Ban cluster bombs, stem flow of conflict diamonds**

In the report MEPs call for an EU-wide ban on cluster bombs - where unexploded ordinance can lie scattered around a wide area endangering civilians.

The human rights report also calls for the Commission to take advantage of its chairmanship of the Kimberly Commission in 2007 to push for stronger action to stem the flow of "conflict diamonds", which often fuel wars in Africa's poorest countries.

Finally, it calls on the Council to "reassess the procedure for listing terrorist groups and...consider a clear method for taking groups off the list". You can read more about the Parliament's 2006 Human Rights report and a debate on it by following the links below.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story\\_page/015-5510-113-04-17-902-20070420STO05500-2007-23-04-2007/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/015-5510-113-04-17-902-20070420STO05500-2007-23-04-2007/default_en.htm)

## EU / UN REFORM

## MISCELLANEOUS

### EU German Presidency of the European Union

#### ► OSCE: Statement of the European Union on recent developments (03/05/2007)

"Mr Chairman,

The EU is deeply concerned about recent developments in the relationship between one of its Member States and the Russian Federation.

**First and foremost, we are alarmed by the situation in front of the Estonian Embassy in Moscow. We condemn the physical attack committed against the Estonian Ambassador in Moscow yesterday as well as other attacks against diplomatic visitors to the Estonian Embassy in Moscow.** This is unprecedented and demands immediate action. As pointed out during a meeting of the EU-Troika with Deputy Foreign Minister Gruschko, we urge the Russian Federation to fulfil its international obligations under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and expect her in particular to protect the personnel and premises of the mission, as well as to ensure unimpeded access to the mission.

Concerning the events in Estonia, the EU considers the relocation of the Tõnismäe grave marker (Bronze Soldier) and the transfer of the remains of soldiers buried on Tõnismäe to a war cemetery as sovereign decisions of the Estonian government based on Estonian law. While respecting the right of all inhabitants of Estonia to express their opinion freely on the relocation of the Tonismäe grave marker (Bronze Soldier) and to demonstrate peacefully against these decisions, the EU strongly condemns the looting, rioting and plundering that followed in Tallinn and other Estonian cities. Such vandalism, which led to serious casualties both among policemen and rioters, is unacceptable. We deplore the fact that a Russian citizen lost his life in these riots.

In an inflamed and highly emotional situation, it is the duty of all concerned to tone down rhetoric and to do their utmost to calm things down. Statements capable of further escalating the situation must be avoided. The EU welcomes the direct contacts between Estonia and Russia and hopes for genuine dialogue leading to constructive results."

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Statements\\_in\\_International\\_Organisations/May/0503OSCEEstonia.html](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Statements_in_International_Organisations/May/0503OSCEEstonia.html)

### EU German Presidency of the European Union

► **OSCE: Statement of the European Union on the Occasion of World Press Freedom Day (03/05/2007)**

“Mr. Chairman,

Today, on 3 May, World Press Freedom Day is observed around the world. We recall those journalists and other media professionals who have sacrificed their lives or their liberty or suffered serious injuries in their efforts to present news and comment to the public at large. In particular we recall those attacks on free and independent media which are all too frequent in the OSCE area, such as the brutal assassination of Anna Politkovskaya, posthumous recipient of this year’s UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize.

The European Union has always made it clear that it regards the freedom and independence of the media as a cornerstone of democratic society and a vital component in the protection of all other freedoms and liberties. We are conscious that threats to media freedom exist throughout the OSCE area and that even in well established democracies such threats constantly appear in ever changing guises. It is for this reason that we consistently support the work of the Representative on Freedom of the Media and welcome the fact that his remit is exercised in all participating states. Just yesterday, in Brussels, the Representative presented the results of a survey of participating States’ legislation and practices on public access to information, classification of state secrets and protection of journalists’ sources. The results of this survey provide food for thought for many, if not all, of us and deserve careful study and consideration.

The EU will continue to raise questions of media freedom and the safety of journalists in the Permanent Council and other fora of the OSCE. The level of freedom enjoyed by the media is a factor in our relations with other States and is a legitimate criterion by which to judge the state of democracy in any country. **The perception that those who attack journalists do so with impunity is very damaging to the international standing of any State. We call on all participating States to join with us on this day in reflecting on past sacrifices and in considering how to ensure that the media can operate in freedom and safety in all our countries.”**

[http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Statements\\_in\\_International\\_Organisations/May/0503OSCEpress.html](http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Statements_in_International_Organisations/May/0503OSCEpress.html)