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- ♦ **Journée Internationale de soutien aux victimes de la Torture : Projection-débat organisée par l'OMCT-Europe, « Restitutions extraordinaires, quel impact sur la protection de vos droits fondamentaux ? »**
- June, 26, 2008 - Espace Sanghor, 366 Chaussée de Wavre, 1040 Etterbeek
- ♦ **Council of Europe: PACE Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights Colloquy "Towards stronger implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights"**
- June, 9-10, 2008 - Stockholm

## REGIONS

### AFRICA

#### ♦ **ACP (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific) Countries**

##### ▶ **Work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2007** (5/06/2008)

Parliament adopted an own-initiative report on behalf of the Development Committee on the work of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly in 2007. **The report welcomes the fact that in 2007 the Joint Parliamentary Assembly (JPA) provided a framework for an open, democratic and in-depth dialogue on the negotiation of EPAs between the European Union and the ACP countries, as shown by the adoption of the Kigali Declaration on development-friendly EPAs.**

The House stresses the concerns expressed by the JPA over several aspects of the negotiations, with regard to both form and substance and points out that the debate is continuing since the adoption of EPAs with the Caribbean and interim agreements with certain countries and regions.

MEPs call on the parliaments of the ACP countries to demand that their governments and the Commission involve them in the process relating to the preparation and implementation of the Country Strategy Papers concerning cooperation between the European Union and their country (period 2008-2013).

The report calls on the Commission to supply all available information to the parliaments of the ACP countries and to provide them with assistance in this work of democratic control, in particular by supporting their capacities.

#### ***Darfur and Congo***

**The report Considers that the JPA resolution on the situation in Darfur, adopted in Wiesbaden on 28 June 2007 and the JPA resolution on the situation in Congo, in Kigali on 22 November 2007, are significant examples of this enhanced dialogue;** Parliament considers that the JPA, a forum for debate between European and ACP parliamentarians, plays a positive role in political dialogue and in the quest for a global, inclusive agreement for peace and development for the people of Darfur.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/028-30824-156-06-23-903-20080604IPR30755-04-06-2008-2008-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/028-30824-156-06-23-903-20080604IPR30755-04-06-2008-2008-false/default_en.htm)

#### ♦ **Burundi**

##### ▶ **The Presidency Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the European Union on the ceasefire in Burundi** (3/06/2008)

The European Union welcomes the return of the delegation of PALIPEHUTU FNL negotiators to Burundi, and the resumption of the work of the joint verification and monitoring mechanism. **It particularly welcomes the signing of the ceasefire on 25 May 2008 between the Burundian Government and PALIPEHUTU FNL.**

The European Union invites PALIPEHUTU FNL to pursue the peace process in a constructive manner in order that the provisions of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement and its various annexes can be fully implemented as rapidly as possible.

The European Union has also taken due note of the appeal made in their joint declaration by the Burundian Government and PALIPEHUTU FNL for PALIPEHUTU FNL combatants to actually receive food supplies as soon as possible. It confirms its willingness to provide, in conjunction with other partners, rapid assistance with such supply operations over a two week period, pending the demarcation and establishment of definitive assembly areas.

The European Union welcomes the return to Burundi of the leader of PALIPEHUTU FNL, Mr Agathon Rwasa. It hopes that this return will signify a definitive stage in the establishment of civil peace in Burundi and will allow the vital economic and social development of the country to be speeded up.

The European Union congratulates the Regional Initiative of South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda on what has been achieved, and it will continue to provide its full support, particularly by means of participation in the Political Directorate.

The European Union hopes that this new context will create the conditions necessary for Burundi's political institutions to be able to work constructively to improve the living conditions of the Burundian people.

The European Union confirms that it will continue to provide its full support to Burundi in its reconciliation and reconstruction efforts.

[http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/CFSP\\_Statements/June/0603MZZburundi.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/CFSP_Statements/June/0603MZZburundi.html)

- ◆ **South Africa**

- ▶ **EU Troika meeting with South Africa headed by Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel** (3/06/2008)

Relations between the European Union and the Republic of South Africa and an overall assessment of the situation in Africa were the key topics of the EU-South Africa ministerial meeting held today in Slovenia. The meeting, headed by the Slovenian Foreign Minister and current President of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council, Dr Dimitrij Rupel, was also attended by the Commissioner Louis Michel on behalf of the European Commission and a South African delegation headed by Dr Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma, the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Representatives of the Council Secretariat and France, the next EU Presidency country, also participated.

***EU-South Africa cooperation***

In opening, Dr Rupel **pointed out that South Africa and the EU had adopted an action plan in May 2007, agreeing to develop a lasting relationship based on open and concrete dialogue conducted with mutual understanding and ownership of the process.** It was also agreed that cooperation would be extended to new areas; the July Summit, organised under the French Presidency, will also discuss a formal framework for dialogue on peace and security. Negotiations on the economic partnership agreement, held under the responsibility of the Commission, are also important.

**Dr Rupel said that the EU strongly supports the negotiations on the Doha Development Agenda (DDA),** which it would like to see concluded as soon as possible; however, this is only possible if all partners

involved, including the EU and South Africa, strive for such an outcome. A comprehensive, ambitious and balanced outcome of negotiations remains the highest priority of the EU's trade policy; the EU will, therefore, further strive to reach the necessary multilateral convergence on all the main issues.

### ***Situation in South Africa***

The Slovenian Foreign Minister thanked the guests for their report on the latest events. "We wish to assure the Government of South Africa of our full support in its efforts to suppress riots. In this context, we also welcome the firm and clear statements made by your President," stressed Dr Rupel, adding that **the EU would like to convey its sympathy to all the victims of the violence, and their families, in particular the foreign nationals that had come to South Africa in search of employment or asylum. As part of the aid efforts, the EU is willing to offer every possible help and support with the aim of alleviating the suffering of the migrant workers and refugees.**

### ***International issues***

On the Middle East peace process, Dr Rupel pointed out that the EU and its partners were doing everything possible to move the Annapolis process forward. He touched upon recent international meetings and assessed that, at this stage, the clear conclusion was that, despite the various efforts undertaken, no major progress had been made. This applied to the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, the situation in the West Bank and, in particular, the Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, both sides and other players should be strongly encouraged to make progress in all areas. Dr Rupel noted that recent events in Lebanon - with the election of the President of the Republic - and talks between Israel and Syria are seen as important, the same being true of contacts with Hamas.

Dr Rupel went on to inform the guests about the situation in the Western Balkans and pointed out that the EU had assured the region of a future in Europe. Assessing the situation in the individual countries, **Dr Rupel focused in particular on the political situation in Serbia after the recent elections that were marked by a pronounced shift towards the pro-European bloc;** he also pointed to the situation in Kosovo where the EU was engaged through its EULEX mission. In this context, the Slovenian Foreign Minister stressed that Kosovo was a European issue, one which the EU is therefore actively addressing.

**The EU regards China's activities in Africa as positive and wishes to build on these relations; Dr Rupel informed his fellow ministers that the European Commission was drafting a communication on starting a three-way dialogue between China, the African Union and the European Union.**

### ***EU-Africa cooperation***

The Slovenian Foreign Minister qualified the EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon as successful and assessed that it was now time to start preparing the joint strategy and action plan. Technical preparations are in progress and Dr Rupel voiced his belief in the willingness of African countries to effectively implement the plan.

Indeed, the EU welcomes the initiative to strengthen cooperation with the African Union as well as the efforts under the auspices of the UN Security Council to consolidate peace and security in Africa. The partnership between the European Union and the African Union attaches great importance to the area of peace and security; the EU provides substantial assistance to all peace initiatives on the African continent.

### ***Situation in Africa***

**Dr Rupel devoted considerable attention to the situation in Sudan/Darfur.** The political situation in the region has remained unchanged, which creates instability for the entire region. The latest rebel attacks in Khartoum once again pointed up security issues, with the risk of



further deterioration in relations between Sudan and Chad. West Darfur has to deal with numerous attacks on the civilian population, the international community faces difficulties in providing humanitarian aid, and the number of refugees is on the increase. Despite the large numbers of peacekeeping forces, there are still not enough. The EU contributes through its mission in Northern Chad. The Slovenian Foreign Minister therefore invited South Africa to support the International Criminal Court prosecutor.

On **Zimbabwe**, Dr Rupel said that the EU assessed the first round of the presidential elections, which had taken place without major unrest, as a positive development; his concern, however, was that the second round of elections would be held as late as 27 June, which would lead to violence against representatives of the opposition. The European Union hence considers that the African Union should already have dispatched its observers to Zimbabwe.

Dr Rupel expressed concern, on behalf of the EU, about the situation in **Somalia**. He assessed the dialogue between the temporary transitional Government and the opposition as favourable; he also added that the Government needed more support from the international community, especially for its efforts in favour of reconciliation. Security in the country needs to be improved and in this respect Dr Rupel pointed out that the EU makes a contribution to the salaries of the Somali police force. However, the EU entirely supports the efforts of the United Nations towards stabilising the situation in the country.

On the situation in **Kenya**, Dr Rupel noted that the European Union saw the effective intervention of African countries in addressing the Kenya crisis at the beginning of the year as a positive action. "Kenya is a good example of how concentric international pressure may help overcome the tensions following the post-election violence," stressed the Slovenian Foreign Minister.

[http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/Press\\_Releases/June/0603MZZ\\_EU\\_JAR.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/June/0603MZZ_EU_JAR.html)

- ♦ **Zimbabwe**

- ▶ **Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the CFSP, calls for the release of Morgan Tsvangirai** (4/06/2008)

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), condemned the arrest of Morgan Tsvangirai and called for his immediate release.

Less than a month before the second round of the presidential election and with the violence continuing, Mr Tsvangirai's arrest will heighten further the fears of the Zimbabwean people and the international community about the conditions under which this poll, crucial for the future of Zimbabwe, will be held.

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/declarations/100919.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/declarations/100919.pdf)

- ♦ **Zimbabwe**

- ▶ **EU Presidency Statement on Zimbabwe** (6/06/2008)

The Presidency of the European Union expresses serious concern about the detention of Morgan Tsvangirai for the second time whilst campaigning in Zimbabwe.

**The Presidency condemns the instructions issued by the Government of Zimbabwe to suspend all NGO field operations in Zimbabwe immediately and without further notice. The decision will affect**

**many Zimbabweans for whom their support is vital. The Presidency calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to reverse it immediately.**

The EU will continue to work closely with the UN and NGOs to provide assistance to vulnerable Zimbabweans by whatever means possible.

**The arrests and the obstruction of NGO field operations along with the recent harassment of diplomats are heightening the fears of the Zimbabwean people and the international community about the conditions in which the second round of the Presidential elections is being taken forward.**

[http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/CFSP\\_Statements/June/0606MZZ\\_Zimbabwe.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/CFSP_Statements/June/0606MZZ_Zimbabwe.html)

## AMERICAS

### ♦ **Brazil**

#### ▶ **Minister Rupel Chaired EU-Brazil Troika Meeting** (6/06/2008)

Slovenian Foreign Minister and President of the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council Dimitrij Rupel today chaired the EU-Brazil Troika meeting at the ministerial level. The European Commission was represented by Commissioner Benita Ferrero Waldner and Brazil's delegation was led by the Minister of External Relations, Celso Amorim. Representatives of the EU Council General Secretariat and the upcoming French Presidency also participated. They discussed cooperation between the EU and Brazil, focusing in particular on the Action Plan implementation, as well as the fight against poverty, the environment and climate change, European security, biofuels, and migration; They also addressed some general issues such as EU-Latin American relations, the general political situation in Latin America, and the latest international issues. Furthermore, Minister Rupel familiarized his interlocutors with certain issues in relation to the Lisbon Strategy implementation and the planned EU enlargements.

#### ***EU-Brazil cooperation***

As regards cooperation between the EU and Brazil, the Slovenian Foreign Minister referred to the conclusions of last year's first EU-Brazil Summit, **which saw a commitment to broader dialogue on global, regional, and bilateral issues of common strategic interest, by upgrading the partnership on the basis of common fundamental values and principles**. The participants also agreed that this partnership should operate successfully and be focused on achieving results and shaping the future. To this end, they commenced drafting a joint action plan, which is due to be completed by the next summit at the end of 2008.

#### ***Relations with Latin America***

According to Minister Rupel, the European Union stressed at the recent Summit in Lima the importance of dialogue between the EU and Latin America, in the desire to establish closer ties at the regional level with Mercosur, the organisation of the South American Common Market. They were unified in the wish for the successful completion of the WTO Doha negotiations, which will facilitate a balanced agreement between the EU and Mercosur. They confirmed the commitment to use the 1995 agreement to strengthen bilateral relations between the two regions and accelerate the negotiations for the new EU-Mercosur agreement.

As regards the situation in Latin America, **Dr Rupel stated that the EU closely followed the democratic changes in some Latin American countries, particularly in the Andean region, where some groups**

which had been traditionally excluded from public life were becoming increasingly involved in it, and where awareness of the importance of social, economic, and ethnic rights was also growing." Each period of transition towards a more representative democracy can lead to some instability, but provides a good opportunity for the strengthening of democracy from the bottom up," added the Slovenian Foreign Minister. In Minister Rupel's assessment, this is a historical opportunity with positive effects but one that requires a cautious approach by all political actors.

Minister Rupel added that the **EU would do everything in its power to strengthen democracy which "is more than just democratic elections"; it also involves democratic institutions, the rule of law, the separation of powers, the independence of the judiciary, and respect for human rights.** These processes must be accompanied by a broad consensus, improved representation of all population groups, and governments that enjoy the trust of the people. Our common objective must be better social and economic development amongst the population, particularly those at the social margins.

The Minister furthermore underlined that **all South American governments had been democratically elected and made considerable achievements in the areas of the economy, relatively low inflation, for example, taxation policy, and in general as regards all social indicators.** The EU is also pleased to note that countries in the region have actively intervened in the alleviation of crisis situations in Latin America. The Slovenian Foreign Minister additionally stated that the EU welcomed the establishment of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUL) on 23 May 2008.

[http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/Press\\_Releases/June/0606MZZ\\_EU\\_Brazilija.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/June/0606MZZ_EU_Brazilija.html)

♦ **USA**

▶ **European Parliament looks forward to working with new US President**  
(5/06/2008)

In adopting a joint resolution on EU-USA relations ahead of a key summit on 9-10 June, MEPs looks forward, in the light of the forthcoming US presidential election, to working with the new US President and hopes for a strengthened US commitment to multilateralism and to peace and democracy worldwide. MEPs are also of the view that the US plan to establish an anti-missile system in Europe at this time may hamper international disarmament efforts.

MEPs are aware that on some subjects, such as the International Criminal Court and the Kyoto Climate Change Protocol, transatlantic differences of approach still persist. The House hopes that the next President of the United States engages his Administration in solving these problems. The resolution was adopted with 552 votes in favour 68 against and 23 abstentions.

***Guantánamo Bay***

**The House is concerned that the very existence of the Guantánamo Bay detention centre and the practice of extraordinary arrests and renditions continues to send out a negative signal as to how the fight against terrorism is being pursued. Parliament urges the Council to issue a clear and forceful declaration calling on the US Government to put an end to the practice of arbitrary arrests and extraordinary renditions and to request the United States Government to try or else release the remaining detainees and to resettle and compensate them in full compliance with international law and standards and to give clarifications regarding the existence of secret prisons outside US territory.**

### ***Extraordinary renditions***

The European Parliament Urges the Council and the US Government to issue a clear and forceful joint declaration to put an end to the practice of arbitrary arrests and extraordinary renditions and requests the US Government to try or else release the remaining detainees in full compliance with international law and standards and to give clarifications regarding the existence of secret prisons outside US territory.

### ***Nuclear proliferation, missile defence, arms control and NATO***

Parliament welcomes the close cooperation between the EU and the US on the Iranian nuclear issue leading, on 3 March 2008, to the adoption by the UNSC of Resolution 1803, which imposes new sanctions on Iran. The House calls on the US, following its diplomatic success in the negotiations with North Korea, to participate directly in negotiations with Iran along with the EU, since the US is in a position to offer additional security guarantees which take account of Iran's security concerns; stresses the importance of cooperation with the US, Russia, China and non-aligned countries with a view to considering complementary concepts aimed at achieving a comprehensive agreement with Iran on its nuclear facilities and their use.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/030-30822-156-06-23-903-20080604IPR30753-04-06-2008-2008-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-30822-156-06-23-903-20080604IPR30753-04-06-2008-2008-false/default_en.htm)

## ASIA

### ♦ **Burma / Myanmar**

- ▶ **Déclaration de la présidence au nom de l'Union européenne sur la prolongation de l'assignation à résidence de Mme Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (4/06/2008)**

**L'Union européenne déplore profondément la décision des autorités de la Birmanie/du Myanmar de prolonger l'assignation à résidence de Mme Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, dirigeante de la Ligue nationale pour la démocratie.** En violation flagrante des normes internationales, la lauréate du prix Nobel de la paix est assignée à résidence, sans chef d'accusation, depuis cinq ans et a passé plus de deux tiers des dix-huit dernières années en détention.

**L'UE condamne également le maintien en détention d'un groupe de militants politiques qui exigeaient la libération de Mme Daw Aung San Suu Kyi et appelle à nouveau les autorités de la Birmanie/du Myanmar à libérer tous les prisonniers et détenus politiques.** Seul un véritable processus de dialogue avec l'ensemble des acteurs politiques permettra à la Birmanie/au Myanmar de parvenir à la stabilité et à la prospérité.

La libération de Mme Daw Aung San Suu Kyi et des autres détenus politiques aurait été une occasion d'entamer un processus de réconciliation nationale et de véritable transition démocratique, dont la Birmanie/le Myanmar a plus que jamais besoin.

L'UE regrette que les autorités de la Birmanie/du Myanmar aient organisé les 10 et 24 mai, dans un climat général d'intimidation le référendum sur la constitution, dont les résultats manquent de crédibilité. À ce propos, l'UE réitère ses conclusions du 29 avril 2008.

♦ **China**

- ▶ **26<sup>th</sup> EU-China Interparliamentary Meeting: Tibet, Burma and the Olympic Games dominate talks between MEPs and Chinese parliamentarians** (3/06/2008)

**Tibet, Burma and the Olympic Games were the three main issues discussed on Monday, the first day of the 26th EU-China Interparliamentary Meeting in Brussels this week. The two sides debated the role of the Dalai Lama in the violent protests in Lhasa in March 2008, China's refusal to exert pressure on Burma's military junta, and the prospects for free access to information for journalists covering the Olympics.**

The first issue addressed was the recent earthquake in Szechuan province. Delegation Chair Dirk Sterckx (ALDE, BE), expressed his condolences to the victims and their families, and congratulated the Chinese authorities on their swift and efficient response. He said the press coverage seemed "open and frank" and he "found it very positive to see articles on the front pages of newspapers about construction and building methods".

***Trouble in Tibet***

The major theme of Monday's meeting was Tibet. Maria Badia I Cutchet (PES, ES), asked about the Tibetans' cultural and educational rights, while several other MEPs questioned the Chinese government's stance towards the Dalai Lama.

Mayor of Lhasa Mr Duojicizhu replied that **"in Tibet there were no human rights before Chinese liberation: you had a cruel, barbarian society based on feudalism, serfdom and slavery. We now have a democratic system, with individual freedoms protected,"** he added. He called the 14 March protest **"criminal violence, premeditated and orchestrated by the Dalai Lama and his followers, with the aim of stirring up trouble in a sensitive period and of causing a bloodbath"**.

Chair of the Chinese Delegation and Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress Zha Peixin added that such problems **"are not confined to China: you had similar problems last year in the suburbs of Paris, or in Los Angeles during race riots."** He added that the common thread among all of these events is that "any responsible government cannot stand idle, it must take action to protect its people and their property."

Helga Trüpel (Greens/EFA, DE), said that the Dalai Lama "has no separatist ambitions, he just wants cultural autonomy", and asked what the Dalai Lama would need to do for negotiations to be restarted. **Mr Zha replied that "the central government policy is consistent and clear: dialogue between it and the Dalai Lama is always open, but he must show genuine will for dialogue, and must recognize that Tibet is an inseparable part of Chinese territory"**.

***Progress on Taiwan***

On a more positive front, Mr Sterckx asked why relations with Taiwan were improving, in order to see if the world community can push for further changes to lower tensions in the region. Mr Zha replied that a lot is due to the elections held in March, which he said "showed that pro-independence views are not popular on the island" and that "mainstream opinion in Taiwan is that the economy should grow, peace should prevail, and ties across the straight should improve."

### ***Non-intervention in Burma and close engagement with Africa***

Mr Sterckx noted that unlike the Chinese response to its own natural catastrophe, "the military dictatorship in Burma showed no leadership", adding that "the population is abandoned, international help cannot reach them", that "there's a difference between intervention and influence", and asking China to do its utmost to help.

Mr Zha replied that "a country needs autonomy to take decisions, and sometimes mistakes are made, but it is up to the people of the country to correct these mistakes". He said "maintaining stability in Burma reflects the interests of everybody involved," and noted that elections are coming up in 2010. Mr Sterckx urged his Chinese counterparts to "ensure together that the elections will be up to standard, and that the results will be honoured, since otherwise it is pointless to hold them."

Ms Trüpel asked about China's policy towards Africa, noting that "**China is responsible for arms transfers to conflict zones, even some under a UN embargo**. This cannot be justified; such transfers are worsening the situation there". Mr Zha replied that "on arms sales to African countries, the accusations levelled against China are unfounded." On the specific case of Darfur, he added that "Sudan, the African Union and the UN should be the ones finding a solution to the crisis there", and he urged outside pressure to encourage dialogue between the Sudanese government and the opposition forces.

### ***Foreign media movements during the Olympic Games***

Manolis Mavrommatis (EPP-ED, EL) asked what opportunities foreign journalists will have to travel around the country during the Olympic Games. Foreign Affairs Committee Vice-Chair of the National People's Congress Qi Xuchun replied that the "**Chinese Olympic Committee has set up an agency to provide services to foreign journalists, and these agencies provided good services to journalists during the earthquake, so you have no reason to worry**".

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/030-30643-154-06-23-903-20080603IPR30642-02-06-2008-2008-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-30643-154-06-23-903-20080603IPR30642-02-06-2008-2008-false/default_en.htm)

### ♦ **China / Taiwan**

- ▶ **Déclaration de la présidence au nom de l'Union européenne sur les relations entre la Chine continentale et Taiwan** (4/06/2008)

L'UE se félicite de la dynamique donnée au développement des relations entre la Chine continentale et Taiwan dans le discours d'investiture du nouveau dirigeant de Taiwan, M. Ma Ying-jeou, et dans la déclaration de M. Chen Yunlin, directeur du bureau des affaires de Taiwan du Conseil des affaires de l'État chinois.

**L'UE pense que la mise en place d'une nouvelle administration à Taiwan offre aux deux parties une occasion unique de réaliser de nouveaux progrès dans leurs relations pratiques et leur donne la possibilité de prendre des mesures tangibles en vue de la reprise d'un dialogue constructif qui profitera aux populations des deux rives du détroit et renforcerait la paix et la stabilité dans la région.**

L'UE se félicite de la volonté des deux parties de saisir ces opportunités.

L'UE réaffirme sa politique d'une Chine unique et son ferme soutien à un règlement pacifique de la question taïwanaise.

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/fr/cfsp/100915.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/fr/cfsp/100915.pdf)

♦ **Pakistan**

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the bomb attack aimed at the Embassy of Denmark in Islamabad, Pakistan (2/06/2008)

The Presidency of the EU condemns in the strongest terms the bomb attack aimed at the Embassy of Denmark in Islamabad on 2 June 2008. The Presidency expresses its deepest condolences to the families of the victims and wishes a quick recovery to those injured in the attack. No cause can justify this act of terrorism and the Presidency, on behalf of the EU, expresses its full solidarity with Denmark.

The EU will continue to support Pakistan in its fight against terrorism and will also continue to render its firm support to all international efforts to combat terrorism.

[http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/CFSP\\_Statements/June/0602MZZ\\_Pakistan.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/CFSP_Statements/June/0602MZZ_Pakistan.html)

<b>EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE ) AND CIS</b>
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♦ **Belarus**

- ▶ Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner condemns the sentencing of three under-aged Belarusian citizens (3/06/2008)

"I condemn the sentencing to 2 years of restricted freedom of M Suboch, P Vinograd and M Dashuk for having participated in a rally of sole entrepreneurs on 10 January in Minsk. These politically motivated condemnations constitute a severe violation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of these peaceful demonstrators. I ask their sentences to be reversed and call upon the Belarusian authorities to respect the rights of Belarusian citizens to assemble and to express themselves. The release of all political prisoners, the respect of the right to assemble and of media freedom and the conduct of free and fair parliamentary elections by the Belarusian authorities would constitute essential gestures that would allow the EU to positively respond."

[http://ec.europa.eu/commission\\_barroso/ferrero-waldner/speeches/index\\_en.htm#03\\_06\\_2008](http://ec.europa.eu/commission_barroso/ferrero-waldner/speeches/index_en.htm#03_06_2008)

♦ **Russia**

- ▶ Russia should revoke official ties with Abkhazia, and withdraw additional troops from the region, says EP resolution (5/06/2008)

After a previous debate on Georgia, held on 7 May in Strasbourg, the Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in the country. The Parliament "expresses its deep disapproval at Russia's announcement that it would establish official ties with institutions within the separatist authorities of South Ossetia and Abkhazia," says the resolution adopted today by a large majority of MEPs (581 votes in favour, 50 against and 17 absentions) calling on Russia to "revoke this decision."



The resolution "urges the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its additional troops in Abkhazia," and "takes the view that the present peacekeeping format must be revised since the Russian troops have lost their role of neutral and impartial peacekeepers." It therefore "calls on the Council to consider bolstering the international presence in the conflict zone by sending an ESDP border mission" to the region.

***Message to Council: visa facilitation and frankness with Russia***

The House calls on the Council and the Commission to "firmly raise the issues of Abkhazia and South Ossetia with their Russian counterparts at the forthcoming EU-Russia summit," which is to be held on 26-27 June. It also asks that they "speed up the opening of negotiations on the EU-Georgia visa regime in order to conclude the visa facilitation and readmission agreements with Georgia in the near future to ensure that citizens of Georgia are not disadvantaged in relation to those holding Russian passports in the separatist regions."

***A mixed review of Georgian elections***

MEPs take note of the parliamentary elections held in Georgia on 21 May, noting "that overall the election day was calm and generally was assessed positively and that substantial progress has been made since the January presidential elections." Nevertheless, they also stress that "further efforts have to be made in close cooperation with the international community in order to address and solve all the problems identified in the electoral process caused by the inconsistent and incomplete implementation of the OSCE and Council of Europe standards, and to improve and consolidate Georgia's democratic achievements." They therefore call on Georgian authorities to "deal with all complaints about the electoral process in a transparent manner and to work on further improvement so that trust and confidence in the electoral process can increase further."

Speaking in the debate on 7 May Charles **TANNOCK** (EPP-ED, UK) said: "A flood of petrodollars is making Russia a resurgent power but, regrettably, it sees everything in zero-sum terms. Putin's foreign policy priority – to reconstruct something looking like the old Soviet Union – has been focused on what Russia patronisingly refers to as its 'near abroad' – the former Soviet Republics in the Baltics, Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus, where Russia is determined to retain its sphere of influence. They are being punished for looking westwards towards NATO and the EU, rather than towards Moscow.

Georgia, under the Western-oriented reformist President Saakashvili, has suffered considerably from Russia's heavy-handedness. Aside from using trade and energy supplies as diplomatic weapons, **Putin has consistently sought to undermine Georgia's territorial integrity through tacit support for the breakaway, self-styled republics of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The arrival of yet more Russian soldiers in Abkhazia – supposedly as peacekeepers but undoubtedly combat ready – and the shooting down of a Georgian drone recently has provocatively increased tension in the region.**"

Robert **EVANS** (PES, UK) said: "Russia has never accepted the territorial integrity of Georgia with respect to Abkhazia or South Ossetia. We know from what we have heard in recent weeks that Russian and Abkhazian separatists have apparently been involved in the spy plane incidents which have led to this rise in tension and we must all recognise that one thing has led on to another. I do not know all the diplomatic measures that are taking place, but I am concerned that the European Union is not doing enough to stop this escalating violence. Mrs Isler Béguin said a few minutes ago that history will not pardon us if we do nothing. Do nothing and the whole area could dissolve into a war – a war which no one will win.



So my message this afternoon – not just to this Parliament, but to Mr Lenarčič for the Council and, indeed, to Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner – is to do everything within your means, at the highest level, to ensure that everyone, above all the Russians, understands how dangerous the moves are that are taking place in this area and that we have got to stop this escalation before we have another Balkan crisis.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/030-30836-156-06-23-903-20080604IPR30820-04-06-2008-2008-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-30836-156-06-23-903-20080604IPR30820-04-06-2008-2008-false/default_en.htm)

- ♦ **Western Balkans**

- ▶ Council Conclusions on cooperation with the candidate countries and potential candidate countries of the Western Balkans in the field of civil protection (5-6/06/2008)

[http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms\\_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/100927.pdf](http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/pressData/en/jha/100927.pdf)

<b>MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST</b>
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- ♦ **Iran**

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the imminent execution of juvenile offenders in Iran (4/06/2008)

The Presidency of the EU expresses its deep concern on news of the imminent execution of Mr Mohammad Fadaei who was convicted and sentenced to death for a crime committed when he was a minor. Mr Fadaei is scheduled to be executed on 11 June 2008. Two other juvenile offenders, Mr Behnood Shojaee and Mr Saeed Jazee, who were also convicted of crimes which took place when they were minors, have also been scheduled for execution on 11 June and 25 June 2008 respectively.

**The Presidency notes that these juvenile death sentences are in direct contravention of the Islamic Republic of Iran's international obligations and commitments, specifically as set out in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, both clearly prohibiting the execution of minors or people who have been convicted of crimes committed when they were minors. These international legal obligations have been freely entered into by the Islamic Republic of Iran and must be fully respected by the Iranian authorities.**

**The Presidency calls on the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with international law and to immediately halt the executions of Mr Mohammad Fadaei, Mr Behnood Shojaee, Mr Saeed Jazee and all other juvenile offenders on death row, taking in consideration alternative sentences for juvenile offenders and respect for international norms and standards that provide safeguards guaranteeing the protection of the rights of those facing the death penalty.**

The European Union has previously raised its concerns with the Iranian authorities concerning the use of juvenile death penalty and has specifically raised the cases of Mr Behnood Shojaee and Mr Saeed Jazee also in this regard.

[http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/CFSP\\_Statements/June/0604MZZ\\_Iran.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/CFSP_Statements/June/0604MZZ_Iran.html)

♦ **Iraq**

▶ **Resettlement of refugees from Iraq** (5/06/2008)

The Council, on the initiative of the German delegation, **held an exchange of views on the resettlement of refugees from Iraq in the European Union. The Council expressed concern about the humanitarian situation of displaced persons inside Iraq and Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries while acknowledging the heavy burden being placed on those countries.**

**Ministers underlined that protection should continue to be provided primarily in the region itself in order to facilitate the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their homes. They welcomed the contributions which Member States are already providing by giving financial assistance to the region, by hosting asylum seekers and refugees from Iraq and by resettling refugees under national programmes.** Member States were, in particular, encouraged to increase or create, on a voluntary basis, resettlement opportunities for vulnerable persons from Iraq in need of protection.

**Member States were asked to cooperate with UNHCR and other relevant organizations and actors in the region in the implementation of resettlement. The Commission was invited to examine the possibilities for the resettlement of Iraqi refugees to be funded under existing programmes.**

The Council notes that many Member States expressed their readiness to offer or to further explore resettlement opportunities for Iraqi refugees. The Council will continue the discussion under French Presidency.

The Council notes that member States expressed their readiness to offer the resettlement opportunities which might in the future lead to a common European response to the situation.

[http://www.eu2008.si/en/News\\_and\\_Documents/Press\\_Releases/June/0605MNZ\\_Irak.html](http://www.eu2008.si/en/News_and_Documents/Press_Releases/June/0605MNZ_Irak.html)

## THEMATIC

### FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES

### JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

- ♦ **Access to documents**

- ▶ MEPs want more clarity for the citizen (3/06/2008)

Could facilitating access to the EU institutions' documents strengthen the Union's legitimacy in the eyes of its citizens? Although the EU has made itself more transparent with each successive treaty, consulting a Community document remains tricky for the uninitiated, and the secrecy surrounding certain deliberations helps deepen the democratic "divide". The solution, say MEPs, is to open up "Brussels"... and the Member States.

A Commission proposal to revise the 2001 regulation on access to EU documents was debated at a Civil Liberties Committee hearing on Monday, with representatives of the Commission, the Council and civil society.

Better access to the institutions' documents would help to bridge the "democratic divide" between the EU and its citizens, said Marco Cappato, (ALDE, IT) rapporteur for the annual stocktaking report on the application of the 2001 regulation. "The EU is always trying to explain what it is. But if we wish to avoid this information being stigmatised by eurosceptics as propaganda, then it must be based on the public nature of the institutions". For the rapporteur, "we must enable those who do not know very well how the institutions work nonetheless to find what they are seeking".

***"The real democratic deficit is at the Council"***

To counter growing euroscepticism, "we must say clearly what we do for the citizen, and how we do it", said Michael Cashman (PES, UK, rapporteur on the revision of the 2001 regulation. In Mr Cashman's view, **"the real democratic deficit is at the Council. We can no longer accept that it debates, deliberates and votes in secret"**.

***The right to know is "as important as the right to vote"***

The future regulation will improve access to documents, said Commission Vice-President and communication strategy Commissioner Margot Wallström, observing that "the right to know is as important as the right to vote". The proposal codifies the existing texts, and aligns them with the Aarhus Convention on access to information and with Court of Justice case law. It also defines the concept of a "document" - to qualify, a text should be "transmitted or registered or received", said Ms Wallström. "We give more legal clarity and predictability (...) there will be more openness, transparency and access. That is what citizens have the right to demand and what the EU has a duty to deliver", she said.

This view was shared by a Council representative, who saw in the new text a "clear and transparent basis". By contrast, he was more cautious about making public the positions of Member States' delegations, considering it necessary to assess this "case by case" and to "protect the higher public interest".

***What is a document?***

The NGO representatives invited to the debate nonetheless remained sceptical. **"No part of this proposal seems to make more documents accessible. It could even restrict them"** said Ian Harden, general secretary to the European Ombudsman. **"Reducing the scope of the definition of a document would be a step backwards, and this is the Commission's choice"**, he declared, opining that **"its discretionary power would be strengthened"** by the new text. **"The European Parliament is the only authority with directive legitimacy"**. The citizen must be able to turn to it in the event of dispute, he added.

***A European transparency commissioner??***

This view was shared by Tony Venables, of the European Citizen Action Service, which called on the executive to equip itself with an **"independent commissioner for transparency"**, **responsible only for processing requests for access to documents**.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/019-30521-154-06-23-902-20080602IPR30520-02-06-2008-2008-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/019-30521-154-06-23-902-20080602IPR30520-02-06-2008-2008-false/default_en.htm)

<b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS &amp; DEVELOPMENT-RELATED ISSUES</b>
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♦ **European Neighbourhood Policy**

- ▶ **Frozen conflicts, uncertain membership prospects preoccupy MEPs at Neighbourhood Policy Conference (5/06/2008)**

EU membership prospects and frozen conflicts in the South Caucasus were debated by MEPs and their counterparts from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, along with Belarussian opposition figures, at a "European Neighbourhood Policy East" conference in Brussels on Wednesday and Thursday.

"As parliamentarians, we are all bound to the idea of pursuing dialogue in order to solve problems", said European Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering, welcoming the participants. Conferences such as this will lead to more intensive relations between the EU and its neighbourhood, he predicted, stressing that "the European Neighbourhood Policy is not a tacked-on policy", but one that could "change the face of Europe."

### ***The importance of being "neighbours"***

Co-chairman Marek Siwiec (PES, PL), noted that the work of Parliament's delegations with third countries has been increasing in magnitude and importance in the past few years. "ENP is a policy for countries with a perspective towards the Union, some for full membership", he said. **Deputy Speaker of the Azerbaijani Parliament Valeh Aleskerov said that the fact of calling the South Caucasus countries "neighbours" while the Central and Eastern European countries were given "partnership" agreements was a linguistic difference with "major political consequences."**

Marie Anne Isler-Béguin (Greens/EFA, FR), agreed, saying that contrary to some fears in the EU, "it would be very positive to talk about the ENP as a 'waiting room' for accession, as it would not guarantee full membership, but at least give a sorely needed European perspective to these countries."

Rapporteur on the Commission's enlargement strategy Elmar Brok (EPP-ED, DE), said that alongside the positive signs of European values in rhetoric, **"possible candidate countries should not only change legislation, but this legislation also has to be implemented."** Co-chairman of the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee Borys Tarasyuk said that "a membership perspective would be a good goal for us to work towards." Mr Brok suggested that Europe "needs to expand its toolbox between ENP and full membership." On Belarus, Mr Brok said the EU needs to look at it seriously, since "one is only truly free when one's neighbours are free."

### ***Stop managing, start solving frozen conflicts***

**The first working group of the conference tackled the issue of frozen conflicts in the ENP countries. Marianne Mikko (PES, ET), said "we need to use all political levers to solve the frozen conflicts in your region: we have to stop managing these problems, and start solving them."** Georgian Parliament Speaker Nino Burjanadze agreed, saying that "unfortunately, these conflicts are not all frozen." She said the region needs European involvement and support in this area, but added that "it is so important to strengthen democracy as such, and democratic developments in the region, not just to solve pressing issues."

Subsequent meetings tackled the efficient use of EU funds, and the question of Belarus. On ENP and the National Action Plans, István Szent-Iványi (ALDE, HU), advised ENP countries to "focus on the efficient use of money" and said that in return for the EU's efforts, "we ask for efficiency and good performance." Adrian Severin (PES, RO) also stressed that transparency is vital and that the EU wants to see "how the cash flow is working." On Belarus, Jacek Protasiewicz (EPP-ED, PL), said that Belarussian parliamentarians will not be invited until they are democratically elected. "If fair elections are held in Belarus, then the EU can offer a lot", he added. External Relations Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner also stressed the importance of fair elections, saying "the next elections in Belarus will be very important and we will observe them."

### ***The Polish-Swedish proposal and further parliamentary cooperation***

**Many MEPs and parliamentarians from the eastern countries backed the Polish-Swedish proposal for an Eastern Partnership.** Mr Szent-Iványi said that the plan "brings the membership perspective closer." Mr Tarasyuk said that the "proposals from Poland and Sweden are a step in the right direction", while

Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner asked "what would be the added value of these proposals to the Black Sea Synergy?"

Marie Anne Isler-Béguin (Greens/EFA, FR), said "we are not here to lecture anybody, we are here to help you in your democratic progress." Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (EPP-ED, PL), said that "we want to create the situation in which the EU is unable to keep the door closed to you, if you wish to enter." He also recalled an EP proposal to set up an EU-Neighbourhood-East Parliamentary Assembly (EURO-NEST), made up of 60 MEPs and 60 ENP parliamentarians, to exchange views on a twice-yearly basis.

[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress\\_page/030-30974-155-06-23-903-20080605IPR30973-03-06-2008-2008-false/default\\_en.htm](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/030-30974-155-06-23-903-20080605IPR30973-03-06-2008-2008-false/default_en.htm)

**EU / UN REFORM**

**MISCELLANEOUS**