

SUMMARY

REGIONS:

AFRICA

Comoros

- ▶ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on the situation in the Comoros (20/06/2007)

Ethiopia

- ▶ EP Resolution on Ethiopia (21/06/2007)

Egypt

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the Shura Council elections in Egypt (22/06/2007)

Sierra Leone

- ▶ Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP welcomes the landmark convictions in Sierra Leone for the use of child soldiers (21/06/2007)

AMERICAS

Republic of Fiji Islands

- ▶ Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on developments in the republic of Fiji Islands (21/06/2007)

Cuba

- ▶ EP Resolution on Cuba (21/06/2007)

USA

- ▶ OSCE: EU Statement on Death Penalty in the USA (21/06/2007)

ASIA

Burma

- ▶ EP Resolution on Burma (21/06/2007)

EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE) AND CIS

Moldova

- ▶ EU Presidency Statement on the local elections in the republic of Moldova (20/06/2007)

MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST

Lebanon

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the attack on UNFIL troops in Southern Lebanon (25/06/2007)

ICTY

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the reports presented by the ICTY President and ICTY Chief Prosecutor to the UN Security Council (20/06/2007)

THEMATIC :

FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

EXTERNAL RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT-RELATED ISSUES

EU / UN REFORM

MISCELLANEOUS

EU Reform

- ▶ Meeting of the European Council (23/06/2007)

Human Rights Council

- ▶ Declaration by the Presidency of the EU on the outcome of the Institution Building Process (21/06/2007)

International Arms Treaty

- ▶ EU calls for support an International arms Treaty (21/06/2007)

Racism and Xenophobia

- ▶ MEPs urge adoption of a legal framework to combat racism and xenophobia(21/06/2007)

CCW

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the outcome of the Meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts of the CCW (22/06/2007)

IMPORTANT COMING MEETINGS

EU - THIRD COUNTRY MEETINGS

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT MEETINGS

Committee on Development

- June, 28, 2007

Committee on Foreign Affairs

- June, 26, 27, 2007

Subcommittee on Human Rights

- June, 28, 2007

Subcommittee on security and defence

- June, 28, 2007

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and home affairs

- June, 26, 27, 2007

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality

- June, 25, 26, 2007

Committee on budgetary control

- June, 26, 27, 2007

CONFERENCES / EVENTS

REGIONS:

AFRICA

Comoros

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on the situation in the Comoros**
(20/06/2007)

The European Union is concerned by the developments in the situation in the Comoros and disapproves of the fact that the Anjouan authorities held the first round of the presidential election on the autonomous island of Anjouan, notwithstanding the decision by the Union Government to postpone the poll until 17 June 2007.

The European Union endorses the statement by the African Union that, in the absence of the African Union forces tasked with ensuring the security of the elections and of international observers, the election organised by the Anjouan authorities is not valid.

The European Union supports the efforts of the African Union, in coordination with the other representatives of the international community in the Comoros, to negotiate with the Anjouan authorities a way out of this crisis and to organise democratic elections in Anjouan.

The European Union appeals to the Comorian parties to find, with assistance from the international community, a peaceful settlement to disputes over the powers of the Union and the autonomous islands and to ensure that national unity is preserved. It calls on the Comorian authorities to make the necessary efforts to improve the functioning of their institutions.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/June/0620Komoren.html

Ethiopia

- ▶ **EP Resolution on Ethiopia** (21/06/2007)

Following up on previous resolutions on Ethiopia, MEPs take another look at the unstable situation that has persisted in that country since the 2005 elections. Opposition leaders who led protests at the outcome of the elections have been convicted in court and may now face the death penalty. While calling on the Ethiopian authorities to respect fundamental rights, MEPs also believe the EU institutions could be doing more and indeed that the EU bears some responsibility since it persuaded Ethiopians not to boycott the elections.

In the wake of the May 2005 elections, whose results are widely held to have been falsified by the government, opposition demonstrations were met with violence from the authorities, resulting in 193 civilian deaths and 763 injured, according to a Commission of Inquiry set up by the Ethiopian Parliament. Members of the Commission were later "forced to flee following pressure by the government to reverse the Commission's findings".

Ethiopia urged to release political prisoners and review court verdicts

Now, on 11 June 2007 an Ethiopian court has found 38 senior opposition figures guilty of charges "ranging from 'outrage against the constitution' to aggravated high treason". Sentencing is expected next month and most of the accused could face the death penalty.

Among a range of demands on the Ethiopian authorities in their resolution, **MEPs call on the government "to release immediately and unconditionally all political prisoners, including elected members of parliament, CUD leaders, human rights activists, journalists, teachers, students, trade union activists and ordinary citizens"**.

The EP also **"urges the Ethiopian judicial authorities to reconsider their verdict, and calls on the Ethiopian Government to repeal possible death and/or prison sentences"**. In addition, it **"calls for the establishment of an international independent Inquiry Commission"**.

Greater involvement and pressure from the international community

MEPs strongly believe the international community should play a bigger role. They ask the EU, the African Union and the UN "to encourage and support an all-inclusive inter-Ethiopian dialogue, with the participation of political parties and civil society, in order to work out a lasting solution to the current political crisis".

MEPs call on the UN "to appoint a 'special rapporteur' to conduct an investigation in Ethiopia into judicial independence and arbitrary detentions, the human rights situation, including minority rights, post-election violence and killings, and charges of treason and outrage against the constitutional order directed at opposition leaders, journalists and civil-society activists"

In addition, the EU Commission and Council should **"pursue a coherent post-electoral policy in Ethiopia" and "consider the application of targeted sanctions against senior government officials"**. The EP points out that "development cooperation programmes under the Cotonou Agreement should depend on respect for human rights and good governance". It hence calls on the Commission and Council to "take a coordinated stance" consistent with Article 96 of the agreement.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/015-7987-169-06-25-902-20070615IPR07922-18-06-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

Egypt

► **EU Presidency statement on the Shura Council elections in Egypt** (22/06/2007)

The Presidency of the European Union has been following very closely the elections for the Shura Council, the upper chamber of the Egyptian Parliament, which were held on 11 and 18 June. These were the first elections since the constitutional amendments granting the Shura Council greater powers entered into force.

The Presidency of the European Union takes note of the low turnout at these elections. It regrets that there were reportedly widespread irregularities and acts of violence. The Presidency of the European Union encourages the Egyptian authorities to investigate these occurrences thoroughly and to ensure that future elections are fair and democratic.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/June/0622ShuraRat.html

Sierra Leone

- ▶ **Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the CFSP welcomes the landmark convictions in Sierra Leone for the use of child soldiers** (21/06/2007)

Javier SOLANA, EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), has welcomed landmark convictions in Sierra Leone for the use of child soldiers:

"Today in Sierra Leone, the Special Court for war crimes handed down its first convictions against three men from the rebel Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, accused of recruiting and using child soldiers. These convictions are an important step toward ending the exploitation of large numbers of children as soldiers. This case also sends a signal to other militia leaders still active in other parts of the world that there is no impunity when it comes to recruiting and using child soldiers A major milestone in international attempts to end the use of child soldiers, the decision of this UN-backed tribunal reinforces the work of other national and international war crimes courts "

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_applications/applications/solana/index.asp?lang=EN&cmsid=358

AMERICAS

Republic of Fiji Islands

- ▶ **Declaration by the Presidency on behalf of the EU on developments in the republic of Fiji Islands** (21/06/2007)

The European Union views positively the lifting of the state of emergency in the Republic of Fiji Islands. This represents an important step on the road back to democracy and towards implementation of the commitments agreed by the Interim Government during the consultations that took place on 18 April 2007 between the European Union and Fiji under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement.

The European Union reiterates that the military takeover, which took place in Fiji on 5 December 2006, constitutes a breach of the essential elements of Article 9 of the Cotonou Agreement: human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law.

On 18 April, Fiji and the EU agreed on commitments aimed at redressing the situation. The EU will continue the dialogue with the Interim Government in the spirit of the Cotonou partnership in order to support and ensure the implementation of all the commitments agreed on 18 April, notably those relating to the adoption of a roadmap for democratic elections.

The EU is following this issue closely, and welcomes the progress made in the dialogue in the Pacific Islands Forum on this subject and the completion of the work of the independent election experts. The EU reiterates that it stands ready to support key commitments both financially and through provision of expertise.

The EU underlines that the cooperation of the Fijian Interim Government is essential for the EU to be able to continue to assist Fiji in its development. Taking into account the positive outcome of the consultations, based on the commitments undertaken by the Republic of Fiji Islands, the implementation of same and the continued dialogue, the EU will shortly consider appropriate measures, as foreseen in the Cotonou Agreement.

Cuba

► EP Resolution on Cuba (21/06/2007)

In a resolution on Cuba, adopted by 50 votes to 21 with 3 abstentions, **MEPs call on the Cuban authorities to allow greater political freedom but they also urge the EU and its Member States not to relax their stance towards the country as laid down in an agreed EU official position.** This resolution replaced the one originally scheduled on Iraqi refugees.

In the adopted text, Parliament notes that dozens of independent journalists, dissidents and human rights defenders are still in jail and stresses **"the need for Cuba to launch a process of political transition to multi-party democracy, with participation and decision-making open to all Cubans on the basis of an open-ended dialogue that excludes no-one"**.

No straying from the EU line on Cuba

In a key point of the resolution, **MEPs insist that the EU and its Member States must not deviate from the EU's agreed policy on Cuba, which was laid down in a "common position" of 1996 (regularly updated since and due for another revision in 2008).** Thus, the EU institutions are urged **"to give their unconditional support and full encouragement to launching a peaceful process of political transition to a multi-party democracy in Cuba, in line with the common position"**.

More pointedly, the resolution **"stresses that the EU's common position on Cuba remains entirely valid, as do its objectives"** and it **"deeply regrets the fact that the high-level visits of the EU institutions and the Member States that have taken place to date have involved talks with all the authorities of the Cuban regime but no direct meetings with the representatives of the peaceful democratic opposition or the political prisoners' relatives"**.

Cuban Sakharov Prize winners

The European Parliament's Sakharov Prize, which is presented each year to defenders of human rights, democracy or free speech, was awarded in 2002 to Oswaldo Payá Sardiñas and in 2005 to Damas de Blanco, both of Cuba, but in neither case were the winners allowed to leave the country to receive their prize. Parliament tried to send a delegation to investigate the situation but the Cuban authorities refused to issue visas to the MEPs. The resolution urges the authorities to alter their stance on both these matters.

Council urged to make use of visit to Brussels by Cuban delegation

MEPs also note that **"the Council has decided to invite a Cuban delegation to Brussels in order to resume a comprehensive and open political dialogue with the Cuban authorities"**. Parliament **"hopes that when that visit is prepared the Council will include in the talks with the Cuban government the invitations of the EU institutions to the Damas de Blanco and Oswaldo Payá, as well as Parliament's desire to send a delegation to Cuba"**.

Lastly, Parliament believes the EU should make use of its economic clout, saying it **"considers it extremely important that any strengthening of political and economic relations - including development aid - between the EU and the Cuban authorities that might derive from a comprehensive and open political dialogue be linked to concrete and verifiable improvements of the human rights conditions of all Cuban citizens, starting with the release of all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience"**.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/015-7987-169-06-25-902-20070615|PR07922-18-06-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

USA

► OSCE: EU Statement on Death Penalty in the USA (21/06/2007)

The EU reiterates its longstanding and active opposition to the death penalty in all circumstances. We consider that the abolition of the death penalty contributes to the enhancement of human dignity and the progressive development of human rights.

While we are always conscious of the suffering of the victims of violent crime and their families, we strongly believe that capital punishment tends to degrade the respect for the right to life. The EU wishes to stress that in our view the death penalty does not serve as an effective deterrent, and any miscarriage of justice, which is inevitable in any legal system, will be irreversible.

While aiming for the universal abolition of the death penalty the EU seeks a moratorium in all countries, which retain capital punishment, as a first step towards this end. The EU is therefore concerned about an imminent breach of a 60 year de-facto moratorium in the State of South Dakota. The EU has learned that Mr. Elijah Page is to be executed in the week of 9 July 2007. This would be the first execution in that state since January 1946. The EU calls upon the appropriate authorities in the State of South Dakota to continue the moratorium on the death penalty and urges them to commute the sentence of Mr. Page. The EU has already intervened in this case in July 2006.

The EU trusts that the competent authorities in the State of South Dakota will be informed of this statement.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Statements_in_International_Organisations/June/0621DeathPenalty.html

ASIA

Burma

► EP Resolution on Burma (21/06/2007)

In a resolution on Burma adopted by 73 votes to 1 with 2 abstentions, MEPs condemn the regime's oppression of the Burmese people and call for the release of political prisoners. They also urge outside actors, such as the EU, ASEAN, China, India and the business world, to each play their part in improving the situation

The resolution first demands "**the immediate and unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi**", the leader of the National League for Democracy and winner of the EP's Sakharov Prize, who has spent 11 of the last 17 years under house arrest. On 25 May 2007 the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) extended her detention for another year.

Parliament then "**condemns the SPDC's unremitting oppression of the Burmese people and its persistent persecution and imprisonment of pro-democracy activists**" and "**draws particular attention to the case of U Win Tin, a 77-year old journalist detained as a political prisoner for almost**

two decades now for writing a letter to the UN on the ill-treatment of political prisoners". It insists on "the immediate release of U Win Tin and all political prisoners – estimated to number over 1200".

What should outsiders do?

The resolution welcomes a statement by ASEAN leaders in which they "encouraged Myanmar to make greater progress towards national reconciliation" but regrets that the ASEAN has not yet opted for "more robust measures against the military junta in Burma" and also that "the Burmese Foreign Minister, Nyan Win, was permitted to attend the eighth ASEM Foreign Ministers' meeting in Germany this year".

China and India are urged "to use their considerable economic and political leverage with the Burmese regime in order to bring about substantial improvements in the country and, in any case, to cease the supply of weaponry and other strategic resources".

Businesses which invest in Burma are asked "to ensure that, in carrying out their projects, human rights are genuinely respected".

EU action

The renewal of EU targeted sanctions is welcomed but it is recognised that they have failed to achieve the desired impact. MEPs therefore call on the Council "to expand the scope of the sanctions and to enlarge the list of those targeted". Meanwhile, the Council must "ensure that all Member States rigorously apply existing restrictive measures". Under the EU Common Position on Burma, "support is limited to humanitarian aid and assistance for those most in need". MEPs believe "all aid destined for Burma must be delivered through genuine NGOs", with a focus on women's groups and ethnic minorities.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/015-7987-169-06-25-902-20070615IPR07922-18-06-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

EUROPE (OUTSIDE OF UE) AND CIS

Moldova

► **EU Presidency Statement on the local elections in the republic of Moldova** (20/06/2007)

Following the conclusion of the second round of the local elections in the Republic of Moldova, the EU Presidency notes with satisfaction that, all in all, they went off smoothly and that voters had been given a genuine choice between candidates and parties, even if the elections did not comply on all points with the international obligations entered into by the Republic of Moldova.

With a view to future elections, the Presidency urges the Republic of Moldova to analyse the remaining problems, above all shortcomings relating to equal access for all candidates to the media, the orderly registration of all candidates, as well as the maintenance of the electoral registers and the vote counting, and to rectify them.

The Presidency welcomes the fact that the elections were professionally supported and monitored by a large-scale OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission as well as a delegation from the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe.

The Presidency regrets that the inhabitants of the Transnistrian region in the Republic of Moldova were not able to participate in the elections.

The EU Presidency is keen to continue and indeed intensify cooperation with the Republic of Moldova. In particular, it wants to carry on giving substance to the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Action Plan adopted in this context.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/June/0620Moldau.html

MAGHREB AND MIDDLE EAST

Lebanon

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the attack on UNFIL troops in Southern Lebanon (25/06/2007)

The Presidency of the European Union condemns in the strongest possible terms the perfidious attack on Spanish UNIFIL troops in southern Lebanon on Sunday (24 June), which claimed the lives of six members of the Spanish contingent and injured a number of others. The Presidency expresses its sympathy to the families and friends of the victims, and wishes those injured a speedy and complete recovery.

The perpetrators of this murderous attack must be identified and brought to justice as quickly as possible. We call upon all forces in Lebanon to work together to this end. The UNIFIL soldiers stationed in Lebanon on behalf of the international community are charged with helping Lebanon to protect its sovereignty and independence, promote stability in the country and allow all Lebanese people to live in peace and self-determination.

The Presidency once again urges all forces in Lebanon and the region to take a determined stand against violence and to support the efforts of the United Nations unreservedly.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/June/0625Libanon.html

THEMATIC :

FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

EXTERNAL RELATIONS & DEVELOPMENT-RELATED ISSUES

EU / UN REFORM

EU Reform

► Meeting of the European Council (23/06/2007)

The German Council Presidency has overcome a mammoth task in Brussels: after almost 36 hours of negotiations, it has paved the way for treaty reform in the EU – with the participation of Poland. It was no easy job. But it was worth it. An intergovernmental conference will now draw up the new treaty in detail.

“We have achieved what we set out to do”, said Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel following the conclusion of the talks on Saturday morning. Europe, she said, had broken the deadlock; the new mandate was a “community effort”.

The intergovernmental conference is to establish by the end of the year which amendments are needed for the new treaty basis. This is to enter into force, as planned, in 2009.

What were the sticking points?

One of the most problematic points concerned the future system for reaching majority decisions in the EU Council of Ministers. The draft constitution had envisaged the double majority principle, according to which decisions require the approval of 55 percent of the Member States with at least 65 percent of the EU population.

The Summit almost failed because of this issue. Poland was extremely reluctant, and even planned to veto the proposal.

According to the Treaty of Nice currently in force, Poland, with its population of around 40 million, has 27 votes in the Council. Germany, which has almost twice the number of inhabitants, has 29 votes. Under the double majority system, Poland loses votes in the Council, while Germany gains influence.

Solution: the double majority system will only enter into force in 2014. Furthermore, in the event of a dispute, Member States may invoke the Treaty of Nice and demand the postponement of an undesired decision until 2017.

The United Kingdom, for its part, had reservations about the legal status of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. It argued that the Charter should not become legally binding in British law and should thus not be incorporated into the reformed treaty basis.

Solution: the Charter of Fundamental Rights is no longer part of the Treaties. However, it is to be rendered legally binding by a reference in the latter. An exception applies in the case of the United Kingdom.

The appointment of an EU Foreign Minister as the chief diplomat of the EU was also the subject of reservations on the British side.

Solution: the functions of the EU High Representative for the CSFP and the External Affairs Commissioner will be merged into the new office of High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. The former posts are currently held by the Spaniard Javier Solana and the Austrian Benita Ferrero-Waldner. With the creation of the new office, EU foreign policy will be given a single profile for the first time.

The intergovernmental conference is to establish by the end of the year which amendments are needed for the new treaty basis. This is to enter into force, as planned, in 2009.

From Constitution to Treaty

The negative referenda outcomes were perceived in some Member States as an expression of citizens' fears of a European super state. This fear needed to be addressed. The 27 Member States were in agreement from the beginning of the Summit that the term "constitution" was no longer to be used.

The European Treaties will instead be reformed by an amending treaty. The new treaty basis will also contain no references to state-like symbols or an anthem.

Further reforms

The EU will in future have a full-time Council President, who will chair the European Council for two and a half years. This will replace the system of the rotating Presidency, and allow for greater continuity.

National competences are to be strengthened: national parliaments will now have eight weeks in which to raise objections against draft legislative acts, should they feel that these infringe national competence. The European Parliament and the EU Council of Ministers will in future have equal powers in deciding the EU budget.

The number of Commissioners is to be reduced: from 27 to 15, by 2014.

Member States – such as the United Kingdom – will be able to opt out of EU decisions on closer cooperation in judicial and police matters. They may also opt out of the common policy in social affairs. If no agreement has been reached within four months, Member States wishing to move forward may do so.

Germany had been given the mandate to draw up a road map for treaty reform back in the middle of 2006. The background to this was negative outcome of referenda on the draft constitution in France and the Netherlands in spring 2005. This had been followed by a two-year period of reflection, which had come to an end. A new treaty needed to be ratified by all the Member States before the election of the European Parliament in 2009, in order to ensure that the enlarged EU would remain able to act beyond this point.

At the beginning of the week, the German Presidency had outlined the status of negotiations on treaty reform to the other 26 Member States. In turn, each of these had expressed its views and wishes. The search for compromises could then begin.

Further information

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/Press_Releases/June/0623ER.html

MISCELLANEOUS

Human Rights Council

- ▶ Declaration by the Presidency of the EU on the outcome of the Institution Building Process (21/06/2007)

The European Union welcomes that an agreement was reached on 19 June in Geneva on the Institution Building Process of the UN Human Rights Council. Throughout the last 12 months, the EU has been most actively involved in the negotiation process and has consistently called for a strong Council that would make it a key-organ of the UN's human rights protection system. Although not all of the EU's objectives could be achieved, the EU joined this agreement in the spirit of necessary compromise.

It is the EU's hope that the agreed package of new and revised mechanisms of the Council will provide the instruments that are required for an efficient and credible implementation of the Council's mandate as foreseen in General Assembly resolution 60/251. The EU would like to express its particular thanks and appreciation to the Council's president, Ambassador de Alba, for having led the Human Rights Council to this agreement.

The European Union welcomes the creation of a mechanism for a Universal Periodic Review of all UN member states that will ensure regular examination of the Human Rights record of each UN member state, without selectivity, on the basis of the same criteria and without consideration of the level of development other than in the outcome phase. Besides this periodic review, the ability of the Council to meet throughout the year, the continued possibility to create country mandates, the maintenance on the agenda of an item on Human Rights Situations and the possibility to call for Special Sessions should enable the Council to timely address serious human rights violations whenever and wherever they occur.

While the European Union remains deeply concerned about the human rights situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, it believes that this issue should not have been singled out in the agenda.

Furthermore, the EU is satisfied that all the thematic mandates and most of the country mandates of the former Human Rights Commission could be preserved. However, the European Union would have wanted to also preserve the mandates on Belarus and Cuba as these cover situations which have long been of concern. Although the EU did not see the need for a "Code of Conduct" for Special Procedures, it understands this document to represent the final step in guiding the work of the mandate-holders, ensuring full cooperation of states with these mechanisms as well as full respect for the independence and integrity of the mandate-holders. In this regard, it is the EU's view that the approval by the Council of the appointment of Special Procedures does not imply election of mandate-holders.

The European Union is pleased that improved modalities for both the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee and the Complaints Procedure could also be agreed.

By adopting the package proposed by the President, the institution-building phase has been completed. The EU considers that the results achieved holds the prospect for the Human Rights Council to develop into the credible and effective body for international Human Rights protection as which it was set up with the adoption of GA Res. 60/251. It is now up to the Council members, all other states and stakeholders to work towards the fulfilment of this goal. The EU re-iterates its commitment to universal, interdependent and indivisible human rights and calls upon all states to fully cooperate with the mechanisms of the Council.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/June/0621Menschenrechtsrat1.html

ICTY

- ▶ EU Presidency statement on the reports presented by the ICTY President and ICTY Chief Prosecutor to the UN Security Council (20/06/2007)

The Presidency of the European Union has taken note of the reports presented to the UN Security Council on 18 June 2007 by Fausto Pocar, President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and Carla del Ponte, Chief Prosecutor of the ICTY. The Presidency stresses that the full cooperation of all States of the former Yugoslavia with the ICTY is absolutely crucial to achieving lasting reconciliation in the region. It is also a requirement for moving closer to the European Union.

In this context, the EU Presidency welcomes the recent arrests of Zdravko Tolimir and Vlastimir Djordjevic and their transfer to the ICTY, and congratulates the ICTY and the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, whose cooperation made these arrests possible.

The EU Presidency appeals to all relevant parties to maintain the current momentum and ensure that all those who have been indicted but are still at large, especially Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, are arrested and transferred to the ICTY.

The European Union will continue to support the ICTY's work until it has been completed, presumably in 2010.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/June/0620IStGHJ.html

International Arms Treaty

- ▶ EU calls for support an International arms Treaty (21/06/2007)

In adopting a joint resolution on the establishment of common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional weapons, MEPs calls on all 153 States which voted for the UN resolution, which included all the EU Member States, to send their submissions supporting an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) to the UN Secretary General without further delay.

MEPs urge the Council to devise a programme of activities using various international fora, including NATO, the OSCE and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, to encourage States to send in their submissions.

The House urges all States to emphasise in their submissions that the ATT should codify existing obligations under international law with respect to arms transfers, and especially those covering human rights and humanitarian law

MEPs call upon all States, pending the adoption of an ATT, to take efficient measures to stop the irresponsible brokering and transportation of arms, ammunition and associated military and security equipment of all types, including components and dual-use items, as well as the transfer and licensing of foreign production of such equipment to parties subject to international arms embargoes or who persistently commit serious violations of international human rights law or international humanitarian law.

The House calls in this context on all Member States to transpose the provisions of the EU Common

Position on Arms Brokering into national law in order to maximise the efficiency of efforts to halt irresponsible arms brokering

MEPs categorically denounce trade in arms and ammunition in violation of United Nations Security Council arms embargoes and recognises that the transport of such goods primarily takes place by air.

Finally, the European Parliament calls upon EU Member States to enhance their cooperation with other States in this area. The House calls upon the competent international organisations and the appropriate regional organisations to recommend, in coordination with the air transport industry, appropriate preventive measures.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/031-7986-169-06-25-903-20070615IPR07921-18-06-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

Racism and Xenophobia

► **MEPs urge adoption of a legal framework to combat racism and xenophobia**(21/06/2007)

The European Parliament adopted a report on taking effective action racism and xenophobia in all Member States. MEPs say that minimum harmonisation at European level is needed to defend one of EU's most important common values. MEPs evaluate the progress of negotiations conducted at Council on this framework decision and expect to be formally re-consulted by Council in the coming months on the basis of the political agreement reached by Ministers of Justice last 19 April.

The aim of the draft decision as it stands now is to ensure that all Member States will impose harmonised criminal sanctions -from one to three years of prison- to any public incitement to violence and hatred against persons of a different race, colour, religion, national or ethnic descent, dissemination of writings with such content, public approval, denial or gross trivialisation of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

The draft legislation does not forbid specific symbols per se --such as swastikas-- and does not mention specific historic events, but it appeals to the definitions of war crimes or genocide contained in the Statute of the International Criminal Court and the Nuremberg Tribunal of 1945.

Parliament's report aims to send a strong political message on the need to ratify this framework decision as soon as possible and recommends Council to "recognise" in the final text the fact that "some Member States have criminalised the denial or flagrant trivialisation of genocide" like the holocaust.

Criminal sanctions should be more severe in the case of public figures and representatives of the authorities, as their status should constitute an aggravating circumstance. MEPs stressed in the text. Other recommendations by Parliament are focussed on fixing common definitions on terms such as "racist and xenophobic offences" or "public order offence".

The Chamber finally requested EU governments to issue an evaluation report on this framework decision at the latest 3 years after it enters into force.

The fact that this legislation will be a framework decision implies that the general provisions adopted by the EU will have to be transposed into different national laws afterwards, allowing Member States the necessary degree of flexibility to maintain their specific constitutional traditions regarding the right to freedom of expression.

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/expert/infopress_page/019-7983-169-06-25-902-20070615IPR07918-18-06-2007-2007-false/default_en.htm

CCW

- ▶ **EU Presidency statement on the outcome of the Meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts of the CCW (22/06/2007)**

The Presidency of the European Union welcomes the fact that the very first meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts of the Convention on the prohibition or restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or those have indiscriminate effects (CCW) dealing specifically with the issue of cluster munitions has set the basis for a negotiation process to start in the near future.

The draft proposal to the CCW presented by the European Union “to negotiate a legally-binding instrument that addresses the humanitarian concerns of cluster munitions in all their aspects by the end of 2008” received wide and clear support by delegations from all continents, even though no consensus on an explicit recommendation for a mandate could be reached. The EU draft mandate therefore remains on the table for the CCW-Meeting of High Contracting Parties in November 2007.

The European Union submitted this proposal with the aim of concluding a legally binding instrument that prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians and includes provisions on co-operation and assistance. The European Union continues to work for this aim.

The European Union expects that the CCW Meeting of High Contracting Parties in November 2007 will move the pressing humanitarian issue of cluster munitions substantially forward.

The Group of Governmental Experts of the CCW met in Geneva from 19 - 22 June 2007.

http://www.eu2007.de/en/News/CFSP_Statements/June/0623UN.html