

# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

*Delegation for relations with the Gulf States, including Yemen*

DGUL\_PV(2006)1012

## MINUTES

of the meeting of 12 October 2006, from 15.00 to 16.00  
BRUSSELS

The meeting opened at 15.10 on Thursday, 12 October 2006, with Tobias Pflüger (1st Vice-Chair) in the chair.

### 1. Adoption of draft agenda (PE 379.801)

The draft agenda was adopted.

### 2. Announcements by the Chair

Mr. Pflueger informed the Members about the following:

➤ **Qatar:**

- **The Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad Bon Khalifa Al Thani, will visit officially** the European Parliament in Strasbourg, on the 15th of November 2006, heading a 11-strong official delegation.
- **New role in pushing Mediation Talks in Mideast.** Qatar's foreign minister visited Gaza to talk with Hamas, in an unprecedented effort in pro-active diplomacy -- that may irritate traditional Arab regional heavyweights such as Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Qatar is proposing a 6 point plan to end the infighting between Fatah and Hamas, and trying to negotiate the release of captive Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. A diplomatic row has meanwhile erupted with Jordan, since Qatar, a non permanent Security Council Member, refused to back Amman's candidate for Koffi Annan's succession.

➤ **Bahrein:**

- **Legislative elections will take place on November 25.** The elections were originally scheduled for May, then postponed indefinitely until the final date was fixed last week. The spiritual leadership of Bahrain's Shiite majority

community, which boycotted elections 4 years ago, called on followers to vote. The Shiites stance came after it emerged that the Sunni rulers of the country were set to give the vote to thousands of naturalized south Asian Sunnis. The Shiites have condemned this "calculated act of gerrymandering". Clashes of Bahraini youths with riot police have been reported; the demonstrators were urging the government to stop the wave of sudden naturalizations ahead of the elections. Last elections took place in 2002; the parliament had been scrapped since 1975.

➤ **Gulf Cooperation Council:**

- **The GCC head has urged a "peaceful Arab nuclear project".** Secretary-general, Abd-al-Rahman al-Atiyyah, made the call in presence of the Bahraini PM, explaining that "*the challenge to construct a solid nuclear sector is a joint Arab responsibility*", and calling the international community to quit its double standards when addressing nuclear issues in the region: in his words, "*if Iran's nuclear dossier is sufficient ground for sanctions, this should also apply to Israel*".

**3. Exchange of views on the situation in Yemen after the visit of a working group of the Delegation from 21 to 25 May 2006**

M. PFLUGER informed Members that President SALEH got re-elected, as was widely predicted, despite his initial statements that he would not be a candidate to his own succession, with 77% of the vote.

It should be reminded, however, that free criticism of the regime combined with the presence of foreign media during last week's presidential polls, opened a debate about the accession of Saleh's son Ahmed, 35, who currently heads the country's Republican Guards -- making, effectively, such plans much more difficult. Former oil minister, Faisal bin Shamlan, who garnered over 21%, also emerged from the ballot as a serious contender for the future. President Saleh had scored 97% at the last elections.

The European Union Election Observation Mission called the elections "an open and genuine contest" but noted problems, including underage voting, voter intimidation and illegal campaigning by the ruling General People's Congress.

Following his re-election, President Saleh announced that Yemen would seek 10 billion dollars in aid over five years, in an attempt to prepare for membership of the Gulf Cooperation Council and stated that a new page of relations with the opposition parties would begin, also promising new measures to fight corruption.

Discussing the report submitted by M. PFLUGER on the visit of the Delegation to Yemen which took place in April, MM DOYLE, POSDORF, ATTARD-MONTALTO took the floor; while all agreed that the visit had been "most useful" or even "fascinating", praising the really "wonderful Yemeni hospitality" with which the Delegation was greeted, several issues allow for little optimism in Yemen: fear of Islamist radicalisation in the future, increasing reluctance to accept aid conditionality (meaning that Sanaa is looking for assistance elsewhere - China, for instance), limited progress in fighting corruption, etc.

Commenting on the results of the 20 September elections all the members expressed their  
PE381.126v01

surprise at the fact that the Election Observation Mission, which was set up by the European Commission, failed to include Members as short-term observers, as is traditionally the case.

While it is true that the final decisions -on when the elections would happen, and whether the Commission should field an EOM- were both taken when the EP was effectively in summer recess, and that, furthermore, the invitation that the Yemeni Parliament addressed to the EP had arrived quite late, there was a consensus among Members in feeling that, nonetheless, the European Commission could have at least informed directly the Delegation for Relations with the Gulf countries, and its Members, of the steps taken, including the Commission's choice of Head of the EOM.

Taking the floor on behalf of the European Commission, M. GROSS explained that there was a clear element of competitiveness in these elections - meaning that democracy was effectively progressing in Yemen, a process which should be praised despite some shortcomings (some problems with voters registration, especially women voters, mainly due to a higher rate of illiteracy, use of state funds for the ruling's party campaign, media coverage biased in favour of the ruling party, etc). He also explained to Members that in some months' time Baroness NICHOLSON, Head the EOM, would give its final press conference in Sanaa, in order to provide a final assessment of the overall electoral process.

As to the EU's development aid towards Yemen, M. GROSS hinted that the fact that these funds are under the same budgetary line as aid to Iran and Iraq does not simplify things.

The report was adopted without changes.

#### **4. Any other business**

No Members spoke under this point.

#### **5. Date and place of next meetings**

The next meeting would take place on 22 November 2006 afternoon in Brussels.

The meeting closed at 15.55.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/  
ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KATASTAΣH ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/  
LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRS/DALYVIŲ SARAŠAS/JELENLÉTI IV/  
REĢISTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŚCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/LISTÁ DE PREZENTĀ/  
PREZENČNÁ LISTINA/SEZNAM NAVZOČIH/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

Бюро/Меса/Председниство/Formandskabet/Vorstand/Juhatus/Проефрео/Bureau/Ufficio di presidenza/Prezidijs/Biuras/Elnökség/ Prezydium/Birou/Predsedničtv/Predsedstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidet (*)
Tobias Pflüger (VP), Avril Doyle (VP)
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Μέλη/Members/Députés/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/Képviselők/ Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputati/Jäsenet/Ledamöter
John Attard-Montalto, Horst Posdorf
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedforträdere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Supplenti/ Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantys nariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleanți/Náhradníci/Namestniki/ Varajäsenet/Suppleanter
Filip Kaczmarek

178 (2)	
183 (3)	
46 (6) (Точка от дневния ред/Punto del orden del día/Bod pořadu jednání (OJ)/Punkt på dagsordenen/Tagesordnungspunkt/Päevakorra punkt/Hμερήσια Διάταξη Σημείο/Agenda item/Point OJ/Punto all'ordine del giorno/Darba kārtības punkts/Darbotvarkēs punktas/ Napirendi pont/Punt Agenda/Agendapunt/Punkt porządku dzennego/Ponto OD/Punct de pe ordinea de zi/Bod programu schôdze/ Točka UL/Esityslistan kohta/Föredragningslista punkt)	

Наблюдатели/Observadores/Pozorovatelé/Observatører/Beobachter/Vaaltejad/Παρατηρητές/Observers/Observateurs/Osservatori/ Novērotāji/Stebētojai/Megfigyelők/Osservaturi/Waarnemers/Obserwatorzy/Observadores/Observatori/Pozorovatelia/Opazovalci/ Tarkailijat/Observatörer

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Esimene kutsel/Με πρόσκληση του Προέδρου/At the invitation of the Chair(wo)man/Sur l'invitation du président/ Su invito del presidente/Pēc priekšsēdētāja uzaicinājuma/Pirmininkui pakvietus/Az elnök meghívására/Fuq stedina tač-'Chairman'
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Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/Na zaproszenie Przewodniczącego/A convite do Presidente/La invitația președintelui/Na pozvanie predsedu/Na povabilo predsednika/Puheenjohtajan kutsuta/På ordförandens inbjudan

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nōukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (\*)

Janssen

Комисия/Comisión/Komise/Komissionen/Kommission/Euroopa Komisjon/Επιτροπή/Commission/Commissione/Komisija/Bizottság/Kummissjoni/Commissie/Komisja/Comissão/Comisie/Komisia/Komissio/Kommissionen (\*)

Oliver Gross

Други институции/Otras instituciones/Ostatní orgány a instituce/Andre institutioner/Andere Organe/Muud institusioonid/Άλλα θεσμικά όργανα/Other institutions/Autres institutions/Altre istituzioni/Citas iestādes/Kitos institucijos/Más intézmények/Istituzzjonijiet ohra/Andere instellingen/Inne instytucje/Outras Instituições/Alte instituīji/Iné inštitúcie/Druge institucije/Muut toimielimet/Andra institutioner/organ

Други участници/Otros participantes/Ostatní účastníci/Endvidere deltog/Andere Teilnehmer/Muud osalejad/Επίσης Παρόντες/Other participants/Autres participants/Altri partecipanti/Citi klátesošie/Kiti dalyviai/Más résztvevők/Partecipanti ohra/Andere aanwezigen/Inni uczestnicy/Outros participantes/Altí participanți/Iní účastníci/Drugi udeleženci/Muut osallistujat/Övriga deltagare

Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppernes sekretariat/Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraktsionide sekretariaat/Γραμματεία των Πολιτικών Ομάδων/Secretariats of political groups/Secrétaireat des groupes politiques/Segreteria gruppi politici/Politisko grupu sekretariāts/Frakciju sekretorija/Képviselőcsoporth titkársága/Segretarjat gruppi političi/Fractiesecretariaten/Sekretariat Grup Politycznych/Secr. dos grupos políticos/Secretariate grupuri politice/Sekretariát politických skupín/Sekretariat političnih skupin/Poliittisten ryhmien sihteeristöt/Gruppernas sekretariat

PPE-DE

PSE

ALDE

Verts/ALE

GUE/NGL

IND/DEM

UEN

NI

Radostina Mutafchieva

Isabelle de Crayencour

Кабинет на председателя/Gabinete del Presidente/Kancelár pôrsedsy/Formandens Kabinet/Kabinett des Präsidenten/Presidendi kantselei/Γραφείο Προέδρου/President's Office/Cabinet du Président/Gabinetto del Presidente/Priekšsēdētāja kabinets/Pirmininko kabinetas/Elnöki hivatal/Kabinet tal-President/Kabinet van de Voorzitter/Gabinet Przewodniczącego/Gabinete do Presidente/Cabinet Președinte/Kancelária predsedu/Urad predsednika/Puhemiehen kabinetti/Talmannens kansli	
Кабинет на генералния секретар/Gabinete del Secretario General/Kancelár generálneho tajomníka/Generalsekretærens Kabinet/Kabinett des Generalsekretärs/Peasekretáribüro/Γραφείο Γενικού Γραμματέα/Secretary-General's Office/Cabinet du Secrétaire général/Gabinetto del Segretario generale/Generalsekretära kabinets/Generalinio sekretoriaus kabinetas/Főtitkári hivatal/Kabinet tas-Segretarju Ģeneralu/Kabinet van de secretaris-generaal/Gabinet Sekretarza Generalnego/Gabinete do Secretário-Geral/Cabinet Secretar General/Kancelária generálneho tajomníka/Urad generalného sekretarja/Pääsihteerin kabinetti/Generalsekretærarens kansli	
Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/Directorate-General/Direction générale/Direzione generale/Generaldirektoräts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/Direttorat Generali/Directorate-general/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generalne riaditelstvo/Generalni direktorat/Pääsasto/Generaldirektorat	
DG PRES DG IPOL DG EXPO DG COMM DG PERS DG INLO DG TRAD DG INTE DG FINS DG ITEC	
Правна служба/Servicio Jurídico/Právni služba/Juridisk Tjeneste/Juristischer Dienst/Öigusteenistus/Νομική Υπηρεσία/Legal Service/Service juridique/Servizio giuridico/Juridiskais dienests/Teisės tarnyba/Jogi szolgálat/Servizz legali/Juridische Dienst/Wydział prawny/Serviço Jurídico/Serviciu Juridic/Právny servis/Pravna služba/Oikeudellinen yksikkö/Rättsjänsten	
Секретариат на комисията/Secretaría de la comisión/Sekretariát výboru/Udvalgssekretariatet/Ausschussekretariat/Komisjoni sekretariaat/Γραμματεία επιτροπής/Committee secretariat/Secrétaireat de la commission/Segreteria della commissione/Komitejas sekretariāts/Komíteto sekretoriatas/A bizottság titkársága/Segretariat tal-kumitat/Commissiesecretariaat/Sekretariat komisi/Secretariado da comissão/Secretariat comisie/Sekretariat odbora/Valiokunnan sihteeristö/Utskottsekretariatet	
Philippe Kamaris	
Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Bonθóć/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Asszisztens/Asystent/Pomočník/Avustaja/Assistenter	
Germana Carnazza	

- \* (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair(wo)man/Président/Priekšsēdētājs/Pirmininkas/Elnök/Chairman'/Voorzitter/Przewodniczący/Președinte/Predsednik/Puheenjohtaja/Ordförande  
 (VP) = Заместник-председател/Vicepresidente/Místopředseda/Næstformand/Stellvertretender Vorsitzender/Aseesimees/Avtutpróedros/Vice-Chair(wo)man/Vice-Präsident/Priekšsēdētāja vietnicks/Pirmininko pavaduotojas/Alelnök/Viči 'Chairman'/Ondervoorzitter/Wiceprzewodniczący/Vice-Präsident/Vicepreședinte/Podpredseda/Podpredsednik/Varapuheenjohtaja/Vice ordförande  
 (M) = Член/Miembro/Člen/Medlem/Mitglied/Parlamendiilige/Méλoς/Member/Membre/Membro/Deputāts/Narys/Képviselő/Membri/Lid/Członek/Membro/Membru/Člen/Poslanec/Jäsen/Ledamot  
 (F) = Должностно лице/Funcionario/Úředník/Tjenestemand/Beamter/Ametnik/Υπάλληλος/Official/Fonctionnaire/Funzionario/Ierēdnis/Pareigūnas/Tisztviselő/Ufficjal/Ambtenaar/Urzédnik/Funcionário/Funcționar/Úradník/Uradnik/Virkamies/Tjänstemän