



D-IR_PV(2009)1110

MINUTES
of the meeting of 10 November 2009, from 17:30 to 18:30
BRUSSELS

The meeting opened with Ms Barbara Lochbihler (Greens/EFA, Germany) in the chair.

1. Adoption of draft agenda

The agenda was adopted without amendment.

2. Adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 12 October 2009

The minutes were adopted without amendment.

3. Exchange of view with H.E. Ali-Asghar Khaji, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Brussels

Mrs Lochbihler welcomed H.E. Ali-Asghar Khaji, Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the European Union and invited him to speak.

Ambassador Khaji thanked Mrs Lochbihler and congratulated her and members on election to their new positions. He also thanked Mrs Beer, the previous Chair for her work. He stated that Iran was a geo-strategically important country which had 11% of the world's crude oil and 16% of its natural gas and provided 5% to 8% of Europe's energy requirements. It was the best route for transit of gas and oil to Europe and had great potential for linking energy transiting networks to Europe. Its high revenue, rich natural resources, well educated and young population, and growing industrial and scientific potential made the country capable of becoming an important economic hub in the region. Its neighbours were in the most important region of the world, particularly Afghanistan, Iraq and the Middle East. Iran enjoyed a great position with deep influence and a determining role in global politics, for example in the fight against drug smuggling and terrorism.

He stated that the EU and Iran had sought to promote bilateral ties and close mutual understanding; however there had been problems in developing the relationship. Problems arose because of misunderstandings over areas such as cultural gaps and double standards, such as in the areas of human rights and terrorism. During recent years, the transatlantic radicalism towards Iran had heightened tensions and hampered opportunities for cooperation in many areas on regional issues. Iran had been condemned for its nuclear programme, despite the fact that it had been proven to be for peaceful purposes. As a result, the EU had missed many opportunities of benefiting from Iran's influence. Iran could help create peace and security in Afghanistan, tackle the flow of refugees into Europe, and confront extremists and terrorists.

He underlined that the European Parliament could use its potential to establish contacts and understanding on different issues with Iran. It could find effective solutions by understanding the root causes and assist politicians by adopting more rational policies. He thanked in particular the former chair of the delegation for promoting relations with Iran in the past year. She and her colleagues had taken rational stances, in contrast with the radical approaches of the Bush administration towards Iran's peaceful nuclear programme and had challenged terrorist groups and opposed sanctions against Iran. He hoped that the new Delegation would continue along the same path and adopt a balanced approach. At the same time the Iranian Embassy was ready to render its efforts to cooperate with the Delegation. Holding joint expertise working sessions on important issues and having cultural and art exhibitions, for instance, would be helpful. He warned against the disruptive activities of subversive groups

He stated that Iran considered human rights to be essential. However the issue of human rights had been politicised, for example in the recent European Parliament resolution on Iran. As a result, it had led to deep mistrust between the two sides. He asked the European Parliament to reconsider its position on the issue.

He reiterated that Iran considered mass destruction weapons and nuclear proliferation to be an unforgiveable sin. Tehran would do its best to help eliminate such types of weapons in the world and in the Middle East in particular. It stressed its right to develop nuclear energy and its slogan was 'to use nuclear energy for peaceful proposes for everyone and nuclear weapons for no one'. He stressed the confidence building measures that had been taken by Iran. In order to defuse the alleged suspicions, many measures had been taken by his government. Iran had permitted inspection of its heavy water facilities of Arak, agreed with the IAEA on developing inspection mechanisms of the Natanz enrichment facilities and offered to purchase enriched uranium with 20% density for the Tehran research reactor. Most recently, it had held talks in Vienna and had actively participated in the Geneva meeting. These and other measures showed greater transparency and confidence building proposals.

He expected that the role of the European Parliament and the delegation for relations with Iran would be crucial

Mrs Lochbihler thanked the Ambassador and opened the floor to questions.

Mr. Belder asked about the negative impacts on the Iran economy from sanctions and how much had the economic problems been self-inflicted. He referred to reports that oil production was now only 60% what it had been in 1979 and that his information came from Iranian sources. He also asked whether an oil fund was being developed.

Mr Ehrenhauser asked about energy issues.

Ambassador Khaji replied that exclusive agreements were being made with some of the European countries on transiting natural gas to those countries. Iran's participation was essential to the success of these projects, particularly as Iran had the second largest natural gas reserves in the world. Its importance to Europe was clear.

The Chair asked for the Ambassador's opinion on cooperation between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran on achieving regional stability. She then asked about progress of legislation to end executions of minors in the future. She recalled that in one case the execution had been postponed because the family of the victim had accepted "blood money". She urged the Iranian judiciary to halt another execution that was scheduled to take place on the following day.

Ambassador Khaji replied that Iran was very concerned about regional cooperation, in particular in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, under the Bush administration, the wrong policies had been adopted and insecurity had spread out from Afghanistan. Iran called for the countries neighbouring Afghanistan to help to bring peace to Afghanistan and had proposed that a trilateral summit between Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan should take place. This had taken place and he believed that this process should be extended to other influential countries.

Ms Rosbach asked about young Iranians and wondered what role they could play on the international scene. The Ambassador replied that Iran was doing its best to develop human rights. It might not be sufficient but the revolution that had taken place in 1979 demonstrated Iranian humanitarianism. He stressed the important role of young people in Iranian political life and elections. Human rights problems did not exist only in Iran; however, it was used as a political weapon against Iran, for example in the recent resolution adopted by the European Parliament. He stressed his government's willingness to discuss human rights issues as long as it was not used as a political instrument.

The Chair stressed that the European Parliament was not using the human rights issue as a political tool and it would like to discuss real problems with Iran. The Ambassador stressed the work being done by the Iran government to promote human rights.

Mr. Lechner agreed that the actions of the Bush administration might certainly have led to problems in understanding between the two sides. Nonetheless President Obama had made changes to US foreign policy and its tone towards Iran. He asked for the Ambassador's opinion about this change of policy.

Ms. Ernst recognised the importance of the role of Iran in the region and stressed that the European Parliament would like to discuss difficult issues with Tehran. She asked about the Ambassador's expectations from President Obama in the context of a change in the US-Iran relationship. She noted too that she, like other Germans, was concerned by the statement about the Holocaust made by President Ahmedinejad.

The Ambassador stated that it was not realistic for the new US administration to continue to pursue the policies of the Bush administration. Iran welcomed this change and President Ahmadinejad had sent a message of congratulations to President Obama, which was the first

time that this had been done in 30 years. Iran hoped that a lot of long standing problems could be solved together but he recognised that this would require time.

Ambassador Khaji referred to the rights accorded to the Jewish community in Iran 2,500 years ago and that the Jewish community still enjoyed all their rights in the country. He underlined that the reason why President Ahmadinejad had made his statement about the Holocaust in a conference was self evident. The Holy Book and the Muslim religion were insulted in Europe under the pretext of freedom of speech. It was, however forbidden to ask how many people had died in the Holocaust. President Ahmadinejad had questioned the scale of the Holocaust in which six million Jews were reported to have died. He did not understand why the Palestinian community should suffer for the Holocaust - for which they had not been responsible.

Ms. Parvanova stressed that Europeans recognised the great history and civilisation of Iran. The two sides should have the same standard for respecting each other's religions and cultures. She had received an official report about 400 people being in prison and asked about their situation. She also asked about the official position of the Iranian government on the case where a ship en route from Iran to Syria with a large amount of weapons had been seized by the Israeli army. There were comments from Hizbullah that they were taking the weapons.

Mr. Portas referred to the visit of some MEPs to Gaza and stressed that he opposed double standards on human rights. He also raised the issue of death penalty for minors and noted that there were efforts to impose a moratorium. He referred to the tradition of tribal and clan justice in Iran and noted that other countries had gone beyond this. He stressed that the right to life must also apply to drug traffickers. He condemned torture at Guantanamo but was concerned at reports that it was applied in Iran. He accepted Iran's right to the use of peaceful nuclear energy but wondered why this particular source of power was being used.

Ms. Verheyer raised the issue of protection of religious minorities, including the Baha'i, which was not recognised as a faith community in Iran.

Ambassador Khaji replied that he was not informed of the exact number of detainees in Iranian prisons, although he believed that around 100 who had been arrested in the post-election demonstrations were currently in prison and that the legal proceedings were underway. He suggested that he could talk about the post-election situation at a future meeting of the delegation.

In response to Mrs Parvanova he referred to false allegations that had been made about the ship and that had been used as propaganda against Iran by the Zionist regime. His government, as well as others including the governments of Lebanon and Syria, had rejected the reports.

He stated that death penalty was an internal policy of Iran. With the executions the government could ensure security and safety for its community. If a better solution could be found the government would certainly be willing to change its current legislation. He suggested having a joint dialogue with the Iranian judicial experts which could clarify the rationale behind the policy of capital punishment. He stressed that many problems between the EU and Iran were due to double standards. He referred to Dr Kissinger's visit to Iran in 1975 in the era of the Shah on which occasion the USA had supported the development of

nuclear power when there was a much smaller population. One of the examples of double standards was that the IAEA had announced over 20 times that Iran did not produce any nuclear weapons, yet, resolutions were still passed against Iran.

He stressed that all minorities were respected in Iran and enjoyed equal rights. Baha'is were not deprived of their rights as citizens, although the government did not recognise the Baha'i sect.

The Chair thanked Ambassador Khaji for the discussion and stated that it helped understand each other better. However, it also showed different opinions on difficult issues and that therefore the two sides must continue the dialogue. She was looking forward to travel to Tehran to continue the discussions.

4. Preparation for the 4th IPM between the EP and the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Chair informed members that the delegation planned to travel to Tehran from 5 to 9 December 2009. She had requested authorisation from the European Parliament's Conference of Presidents on the issue and had also written to the Ambassador.

5. Any other business

The calendar of delegation activity for 2010 would be adopted shortly. This document was purely indicative as it would depend on whether the delegation managed to travel to Iran in 2009.

6. Date and place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Delegation was scheduled to take place in Brussels on 2 December between 1130 and 1230hrs.

The meeting closed at 19:10hrs.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/
ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KATAΣΤΑΣΗ ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/
LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRS/DALYVIŲ SĄRAŠAS/JELENLÉTI ÍV/
REĢISTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŚCI/LISTA DE PRESENÇAS/LISTĂ DE PREZENȚĂ/
PREZENČNÁ LISTINA/SEZNAM NAVZOČIH/LÄSNÄOLOLISTA/DELTAGARLISTA**

Бюро/Mesa/Předsednictvo/Formandskabet/Vorstand/Juhatus/Προεδρείο/Bureau/Ufficio di presidenza/Prezidijs/Biuras/Elnökség/ Prezydium/Birou/Předsednictvo/Predsstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidiet (*)
Barbara LOCHBIHLER, Kurt LECHNER, Cornelia ERNST
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Μέλη/Members/Députés/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/Képviselők/ Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputați/Jäsenet/Ledamöter
Bastian BELDER, Dan JORGENSEN, Marco SCURRIA, Boguslaw SONIK,
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Supplenti/ Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantys nariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleanți/Náhradníci/Namestniki/ Varajäsenet/Suppleanter
Martin EHRENHAUSER, George CUTAS, Antonyia PARVANOV, Miguel PORTAS, Anna ROSBACH, Potito SALATO, Sabine VERHEYEN

187 (2)
193 (3)
46 (6) (Точка от дневния ред/Punto del orden del día/Bod pořadu jednání (OJ)/Punkt på dagsordenen/Tagesordnungspunkt/Päevakorral punkt/Ημερήσια Διάταξη Σημείο/Agenda item/Point OJ/Punto all'ordine del giorno/Darba kārtības punkts/Darbotvarkes punktas/ Napirendi pont/Punt Agenda/Agendapunt/Punkt porządku dziennego/Ponto OD/Punct de pe ordinea de zi/Bod programu schôdze/ Točka UL/Esityslistan kohta/Föredragningslista punkt)

Наблюдатели/Observadores/Pozorovatelé/Observatører/Beobachter/Vaatlejad/Παρατηρητές/Observers/Observateurs/Osservatori/ Novērotāji/Stebėtojai/Megfigyelők/Osservatori/Waarnemers/Obserwatorzy/Observadores/Observatori/Pozorovatelia/Opazovalci/ Tarkkailijat/Obserwatörer
M. Pangioton, C. Dhillon, C. O'Connor, T. Andersen, M. Kovacs, Ilan Scialom, Inga Werde, Nuno Wahromstat, Adam Monchtar, A. Bartes, Lucas Hartong, Sophia Chrysopoulou, Simone Misiiti, Ana Cernea, Jonathan Roten, andrew Hillman

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Εσιμεhe 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'/ Op uitnodiging van de voorzitter/Na zaproszenie Przewodniczącego/A convite do Presidente/La invitația președintelui/Na pozvanie predsedu/Na povabilo predsednika/Puheenjohtajan kutsusta/På ordförandens inbjudan
Ali-Asghar Khaji, Ambassador of Iran in Brussels

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nõukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (*)	
Pekka Shemeikka	
Комисия/Comisión/Komise/Kommissionen/Kommission/Euroopa Komisjon/Επιτροπή/Commission/Commissione/Komisija/Bizottság/Kummissjoni/Commissie/Komisja/Comissão/Comisie/Komisia/Komissio/Kommissionen (*)	
Други институции/Otras instituciones/Ostatní orgány a instituce/Andre institutioner/Andere Organe/Muud institutsioonid/Άλλα θεσμικά όργανα/Other institutions/Autres institutions/Altre istituzioni/Citas iestādes/Kitos institucijos/Más intézmények/Istutuzjonijiet ohra/Andere instellingen/Inne instytucje/Outras Instituições/Alte institūti/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 klātesošie/Kiti dalyviai/Más résztvevők/Partecipanti ohra/Andere aanwezigen/Inni uczestnicy/Outros participantes/Alți participanți/Ini účastníci/Drugi udeleženci/Muut osallistujat/Övriga deltagare	
Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppernes sekretariat/Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraksioonide sekretariaat/Γραμματεία των Πολιτικών Ομάδων/Secretariats of political groups/Secrétariat des groupes politiques/Segreteria gruppi politici/Politisko grupu sekretariāts/Frakciju sekretoriai/Képviseletcsoportok titkársága/Sekretarjat gruppi politici/Fractiesecretariaten/Sekretariat Grup Politycznych/Secr. dos grupos políticos/Secretariate grupuri politice/Sekretariát politických skupin/Sekretariat političnih skupin/Poliittisten ryhmien sihteeristöt/Gruppernas sekretariat	
PPE S&D ALDE ECR Verts/ALE GUE/NGL EFD NI	Rino Trombetta, Jan-Willem Vlasman Ruth De Cesare M. Shullieabhain

Кабинет на председателя/Gabinete del Presidente/Kancelář předsedy/Formandens Kabinet/Kabinett des Präsidenten/Presidendi kantslelei/Γραφείο Προέδρου/President's Office/Cabinet du Président/Gabinetto del Presidente/Priekšsēdētāja kabinets/Pirmininko kabinetas/Elnöki hivatal/Kabinett 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/Kancelář generálního tajemníka/Generalsekretærens Kabinet/Kabinett des Generalsekretärs/Peasekretäri büroo/Γραφείο Γενικού Γραμματέα/Secretary-General's Office/Cabinet du Secrétaire général/Gabinetto del Segretario generale/Generalsekretära kabinets/Generalinio sekretoriaus kabinetas/Főtitkári hivatal/Kabinett tas-Segretarju Ġenerali/Kabinet van de secretaris-generaal/Gabinet Sekretarza Generalnego/Gabinete do Secretário-Geral/Cabinet Secretar General/Kancelária generálního tajomníka/Urad generalnega sekretarja/Pääsihteerin kabinetti/Generalsekreterarens kansli	
Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/Directorate-General/Direction générale/Direzione generale/Ġenerāldirektōrāts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/Direttorat Ġenerali/Direktoraten-generaal/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generálne riaditeľstvo/Generalni direktorat/Pääosasto/Generaldirektorat	
DG PRES DG IPOL DG EXPO DG COMM DG PERS DG INLO DG TRAD DG INTE DG FINS DG ITEC	Sandro D'Angelo D. Nickel, C. Stockelj
Правна служба/Servicio Jurídico/Právní 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/Rättstjänsten	
Секретариат на комисията/Secretaría de la comisión/Sekretariát výboru/Udvalgssekretariatet/Ausschusseksretariat/Komisjoni sekretariaat/Γραμματεία επιτροπής/Committee secretariat/Secrétariat de la commission/Segreteria della commissione/Komitejas sekretariāts/Komiteto sekretoriatas/A bizottság titkársága/Sekretarjat tal-kumitat/Commissiesecretariaat/Sekretariat komisji/Sekretariado da comissão/Sekretariat comisie/Sekretariat odbora/Valiokunnan sihteeristö/Utskottssekretariatet	
Tim Boden	
Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Βοηθός/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Asszisztens/Asystent/Pomočnik/Avustaja/Assisterter	
Emma Mollet	

- * (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Formand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair(wo)man/Président/Priekšsēdētājs/Pirmininkas/Elnök/'Chairman'/Voorzitter/Przewodniczący/Preşedinte/Predseda/Predsednik/Puheenjohtaja/Ordförande
- (VP) = Заместник-председател/Vicepresidente/Mistopředseda/Næstformand/Stellvertretender Vorsitzender/Aseesimees/Αντιπρόεδρος/Vice-Chair(wo)man/Vice-Président/Priekšsēdētāja vietnieks/Pirmininko pavaduotojas/Alelnök/Viçi 'Chairman'/Ondervoorzitter/Wiceprzewodniczący/Vice-Presidente/Vicepreşedinte/Podpredseda/Podpredsednik/Varapuheenjohtaja/Vice ordförande
- (M) = Член/Miembro/Člen/Medlem./Mitglied/Parlamendiliige/Μέλος/Member/Membre/Membro/Deputāts/Narys/Képviselő/Membru/Lid/Członek/Membro/Membru/Člen/Poslanec/Jäsen/Ledamot
- (F) = Длъжностно лице/Funcionario/Úředník/Tjenestemand/Beamter/Ametnik/Υπάλληλος/Official/Fonctionnaire/Funzionario/Ierēdnis/Pareigūnas/Tisztviselő/Ufficial/Ambtenaar/Urządник/Funcionário/Funcionar/Úradník/Uradnik/Virkamies/Tjänsteman