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*Delegation for relations with Iran*

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**D-IR\_PV(2011)1004**

**MINUTES**

of the meeting of 4 October 2011, from 14.00 to 15.00  
Brussels

**1. Adoption of the draft agenda**

Mrs Lochbihler opened the meeting and apologised for the change in the time.

The draft agenda was adopted without amendment

**2. Adoption of the draft minutes of the meeting of 20 June 2011**

The draft minutes were adopted without amendment.

**3. Communications by the Chair**

Mrs Lochbihler announced that she had recently been elected as Chair of the Human Rights Sub-Committee and would therefore be standing down as Chair of the Delegation for relations with Iran. The Green Group had nominated Ms Tarja Cronberg as her replacement.

She informed members that she had written the following letters since the last delegation meeting in June:

- On 27 June 2011 she had made a statement expressing concern about the situation of 18 prisoners of conscience who had started a hunger strike in reaction to the deaths of women's rights activist Ms Haleh Sahabi and also Mr Resa Hoda.
- She had written to the Iranian Ambassador on 16 August 2011 concerning the arrests of a number of members of the Baha'i community who had been involved in the Baha'i

Institute for Higher Education. She received a reply from the Ambassador in which he stated that they had not been imprisoned for their beliefs but for their "illegal activities under cultural and social disguises".

- On 28 September 2011 she and Ms Cronberg had written a letter calling for a halt to the execution of Pastor Yousef Nadarkhani who had been found guilty of apostasy for converting from Islam to Christianity. She noted that the charges had now apparently been changed to rape, extortion and national security.
- Together with some other members, she had also put a number of parliamentary questions to the Commission - the questions and the answers were in the meeting dossier. They concerned an agreement between Iran and Bosnia-Herzegovina; human rights violations on the basis of sexual orientation and gender equality; and guaranteeing coherence in the implementation of the sanctions regime.

She noted that the dossier also included a number of recent statements by High Representative Catherine Ashton on developments in Iran.

She informed members that she had recently met the current Iranian Ambassador to the European Union, Mr Ali-Asher Khaji, who would be leaving shortly to take up a post as Deputy Foreign Minister for Europe and the Americas.

#### **4. Appointment of new Chair**

Mrs Lochbihler thanked her colleagues in the Bureau, the delegation and the secretariat who had supported her in the work of the delegation. She noted that she would remain as a substitute member of the delegation.

Mr Lechner thanked Mrs Lochbihler for all the work that she had done and wished her every success.

Mrs Cronberg then took the Chair. She thanked all those present and noted that she had a challenging task. She thanked Mrs Lochbihler for her work for the delegation and looked forward to continued cooperation. She noted that she had been impressed by the report of Mr Belder and the work of the delegation. She had worked in the fields of security and nuclear issues. She was aware of the differences about the approach to Iran but stressed that there was broad agreement on the goal of promoting democracy and human rights.

Mr Belder congratulated Mrs Cronberg and thanked Mrs Lochbihler for her work as Chair of the delegation. He wished them both well.

#### **5. Visit of Enlarged Bureau to Iran on 31 October - 4 November 2011**

Mrs Cronberg announced that on Thursday 29 September 2011 the Conference of Presidents had authorised the sending of a five member delegation to Iran from 31 October to 4

November 2011. She was aware of the past attempts to travel to Iran and that recently they had not been successful

She noted that the delegation would be made up of the Bureau, plus one member from each of the two largest political groups that were not represented in the Bureau - i.e. the S&D group and the ALDE group. She outlined the programme that would include meetings with the government, Majlis, opposition and civil society. She voiced regret that there had been no delegation to Iran in recent years and noted that delegations went to other controversial countries, such as North Korea.

The delegation would travel in the run-up to the parliamentary elections in March 2012 and would be able to learn about the situation at first hand. There had been positive feedback from the Polish embassy in Tehran.

Mr Scurria also congratulated Mrs Cronberg and stressed that he looked forward to working with her. He would have liked more consultation to have taken place with the EP delegation before the request had been made to the Conference of Presidents. He had reservations about whether it was appropriate to travel to Iran. He referred in particular to the death sentence that had been imposed on a minor. He wanted to know what was going to be on the programme of the visit and with whom the delegation would be meeting. He did not want the visit to be completely controlled by the Iranian authorities. He believed that a list should be prepared of those whom the delegation wished to meet. He did not want to "shake the hand of Ahmadinejad" or appear to be endorsing what was happening in Iran.

Mrs van Brempt stressed that her group supported the request to travel as long as there was a balanced programme.

Mr Belder stressed the need for an appropriate programme. He was in favour of wide contacts. He stressed that he wanted to come in his role as the rapporteur and believed that it would be entirely inappropriate for the delegation to travel without the rapporteur. He underlined too his belief that all political groups should be represented on the visit

Mr Salatto congratulated the new Chair. He argued that there were forces in Iran that wanted to use the visit for their domestic purposes. He believed that any weakness could lead to the visit being exploited for the wrong purposes. He noted that the Iranian ambassador in Rome had favoured a visit from the European Parliament. Mr Salatto believed that conditions should be imposed before any visit took place, such as a moratorium on the death penalty or the release of political prisoners. The message that he had received from the Iranian authorities was that the Iranian government would not "pay a price" for a visit from the European Parliament. He stressed the need to be very careful and not to simply "offer gifts" to the Iranian side. It was essential to meet representatives of the opposition and civil society and possibly go to a prison. Any programme should do justice to the European Parliament.

Mrs Schaake thanked Mrs Lochbihler and Mrs Cronberg. She stressed that the members of the EP delegation shared the same goals, although there were differences over how to achieve them. It was essential to work together and to ensure close coordination on the preparations for the visit. It was important to be realistic, while pushing for a balanced programme. If this was not possible, this would be the responsibility of the Iranian side. She recognised that it would be difficult to speak to human rights defenders. She noted that there were many other

countries where peoples' human rights were not respected. She was not aware of any other EP delegation which had such conditions placed on its travel. It was counterproductive to send a signal that Iran was in some way special. She agreed that it was important not to be used for propaganda purposes by the Iranian authorities. She argued that dialogue was important and that there was diversity of opinion within the Iranian power structures. It was questionable whether isolation of Iran served any purpose. She stressed the need to work with the EU representations on the ground. Many of those she had contacted in Iran welcomed the prospect of a visit by the EP.

Mr Lechner stressed that it would be difficult to prepare in advance when it was not clear what the situation would be on the ground. It was important not to hint at support of the Iranian regime but there were also advantages that could accrue from the visit.

Mrs Cronberg stressed that the EP delegation should not "give gifts" to the Iranians. The programme needed to be balanced and was not restricted to official meetings. She asked for suggestions of possible elements to be included. She wanted to ensure that the Delegation sent a coherent message. She agreed that the "devil was in the detail" of the programme. She promised Mr Belder that she would enquire about the situation of the rapporteur.

## **6. Any other business**

Mrs Cronberg referred to a number of articles in the dossier. These included an article in the International Herald Tribune detailing the offer of President Ahmadinejad that Iran would suspend production of some uranium-enrichment activities in exchange for fuel supplies from the USA. She believed that this offer should be properly studied.

She referred to report about protests in the north west of Iran calling for the government to stop the gradual disappearance of Lake Orumiyeh, one of the world's largest salt water lakes and which is classified as a biosphere by Unesco.

Finally, she drew attention to the recent speech to the United Nations by President Ahmadinejad and the debate in the USA over the listing of the People's Mujahedeen as a terrorist organisation.

She informed members that last week the Conference of Delegation Chairs had in the previous week approved the draft 2012 programme of delegation activity. This included initial proposals for an Iranian delegation to travel to Brussels from 9-12 July 2012 (week 28) and for an EP delegation to travel to Iran from 28 October to 2 November 2012 (week 44).

## **7. Date and place of next meeting**

Mrs Cronberg noted that the next meeting had been scheduled for 21 November 2011 but that there would be another meeting in the course of October to discuss the programme in more detail. Members would be informed as soon as possible.

**ПРИСЪСТВЕН ЛИСТ/LISTA DE ASISTENCIA/PREZENČNÍ LISTINA/DELTAGERLISTE/ ANWESENHEITSLISTE/KOHALOLIJATE NIMEKIRI/KATAΣTAΣH ΠΑΡΟΝΤΩΝ/RECORD OF ATTENDANCE/ LISTE DE PRÉSENCE/ELENCO DI PRESENZA/APMEKLĒJUMU REĢISTRŠ/DALYVIŲ SĄRAŠAS/JELENLĒTI ÍV/ REĢISTRU TA' ATTENDENZA/PRESENTIELIJST/LISTA OBECNOŠCI/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/Predsednictvo/Predsedstvo/Puheenjohtajisto/Presidiet (*)
Barbara Lochbihler, Kurt Lechner, Tarja Cronberg
Членове/Diputados/Poslanci/Medlemmer/Mitglieder/Parlamendiliikmed/Μέλη/Members/Députés/Deputati/Deputāti/Nariai/Képviselők/Membri/Leden/Posłowie/Deputados/Deputați/Jäsenet/Ledamöter
Bastiaan Belder, Dan Jørgensen, Marco Scurria, Salvatore Tatarella, Kathleen Van Brempt
Заместници/Suplentes/Náhradníci/Stedfortrædere/Stellvertreter/Asendusliikmed/Αναπληρωτές/Substitutes/Suppléants/Supplenti/Aizstājēji/Pavaduojantys nariai/Póttagok/Sostituti/Plaatsvervangers/Zastępcy/Membros suplentes/Supleantî/Náhradníci/Namestniki/Varajäsenet/Suppleanter
George Cutas, Marietje Schaake, Potito Salatto, Marita Ulvskog, Barbara Lochbihler

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

Наблюдатели/Observadores/Pozorovatelé/Observatører/Beobachter/Vaatlejad/Παρατηρητές/Observers/Observateurs/Osservatori/Novērotāji/Stebėtojai/Megfigyelők/Osservatori/Waarnemers/Obserwatorzy/Observadores/Observatori/Pozorovatelia/Opazovalci/Tarkkailijat/Observatörer

По покана на председателя/Por invitación del presidente/Na pozvání předsedy/Efter indbydelse fra formanden/Auf Einladung des Vorsitzenden/Esimehe 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 tal-President/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

Съвет/Consejo/Rada/Rådet/Rat/Nõukogu/Συμβούλιο/Council/Conseil/Consiglio/Padome/Taryba/Tanács/Kunsill/Raad/Conselho/Consiliu/Svet/Neuvosto/Rådet (*)
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<p>Комисия/Comisión/Komise/Kommissionen/Kommission/Euroopa Komisjon/Επιτροπή/Commission/Commissione/Komisija/Bizottság/Kummissjoni/Commissie/Komisja/Comissão/Comisie/Komisja/Komissio/Kommissionen (*)</p>	
<p>Европейска служба за външна дейност/Evropská služba pro vnější činnost/EU-Udenrigstjenesten/Europäischer Auswärtiger Dienst/Euroopa välisteenistus/Ευρωπαϊκή Υπηρεσία Εξωτερικής Δράσης/European External Action service/Servicio Europeo de Acción Exterior/Service européen pour l'action extérieure/Servizio europeo per l'azione esterna/Eiropas Ārējās darbības dienests/Europos išorės veiksmų tarnyba/Európai Külügyi Szolgálat/Servizz Ewropew għall-Azzjoni Esterna/Europese dienst voor extern optreden/Europejska Służba Działañ Zewnętrznych/Serviço Europeu para a Acção Externa/Serviciul european pentru actiune externă/Európska služba pre vonkajšiu činnost/Evropska služba za zunanje delovanje/Euroopan ulkosuhdehallinto/Europeiska avdelningen för yttre åtgärd (*)</p>	
<p>Lene Hove</p>	
<p>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/Istituzjonijiet oħra/Andere instellingen/Inne instytucje/Outras Instituições/Alte instituiii/Iné inštitúcie/Druge institucije/Muut toimielimet/Andra institutioner/organ</p>	

<p>Други учесници/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 oħra/Andere aanwezigen/Inni uczestnicy/Outros participantes/Alți participanți/Iní účastníci/Dруги udeleženci/Muut osallistujat/Övriga deltagare</p>	
<p>Einollah Souri, Raphael Kreusch, Anwar Mirsattari, Exarchos Panagotis, Miriam Heimann, Inga Werden, Mariya Stambolieva, M. Kovacs, Jouni Vauhkonen, Sofia Santos, M. Saarzeinen</p>	

<p>Секретариат на политическите групи/Secretaría de los Grupos políticos/Sekretariát politických skupin/Gruppenes sekretariat/Sekretariat der Fraktionen/Fraktsioonide 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/Gruppenas sekretariat</p>	
<p>PPE</p> <p>S&amp;D</p> <p>ALDE</p> <p>ECR</p> <p>Verts/ALE</p> <p>GUE/NGL</p> <p>EFD</p> <p>NI</p>	<p>Jan-Willem Vlasman, Rino Trombetta</p> <p>Eldar Mamedov</p> <p>Petra Solli</p> <p>Thomas Robertson</p> <p>Sabine Meyer</p> <p>Diepenbroek Dick Jan</p>

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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  
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Segretarju Generali/Kabinet van de secretaris-generaal/Gabinet Sekretarza Generalnego/Gabinete do Secretário-Geral/Cabinet Secretar  
General/Kancelária generalného tajomníka/Urząd generalnego sekretarza/Pääsihteerin kabinetti/Generalsekreterarens kansli

Генерална дирекция/Dirección General/Generální ředitelství/Generaldirektorat/Generaldirektion/Peadirektoraat/Γενική Διεύθυνση/  
Directorate-General/Direction générale/Direzione generale/Generäldirektoräts/Generalinis direktoratas/Főigazgatóság/Direktorat  
Ġenerali/Direktoraten-generaal/Dyrekcja Generalna/Direcção-Geral/Direcții Generale/Generälne riaditeľ'stvo/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, Rosemary Opacic, Myriam Goinard; L. Hueting  
Istvan Perger

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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/  
Secretariado da comissão/Secretariat comisie/Sekretariat odbora/Valiokunnan sihteeristö/Utskottssekretariatet

Tim Boden, Jonás Condomines Beraud

Сътрудник/Asistente/Asistent/Assistent/Assistenz/Βοηθός/Assistant/Assistente/Palīgs/Padējējas/Asszisztens/Asystent/Pomočnik/  
Avustaja/Assistenten

Ainhoa Markuleta, Tania Colantone

- \* (P) = Председател/Presidente/Předseda/Foemand/Vorsitzender/Esimees/Πρόεδρος/Chair(wo)man/Président/Priekšsēdētājs/Pirmininkas/  
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