



MEPs congratulate new EU human rights envoy, Stavros Lambrinidis

Committees: Subcommittee on Human Rights

Barbara Lochbihler, chair of the EP human rights subcommittee, welcomed the appointment of Stavros Lambrinidis as EU Special Representative for Human Rights by the Council on Wednesday, pointing to the vital role he would be playing in this new post, created in line with Parliament's repeated demands.

"I welcome the appointment of Stavros Lambrinidis as the first EU Special Representative for Human Rights and wish him good luck for his mandate.

The longstanding MEP, and also Vice-President of the EP, is very familiar with EU structures and has experience in foreign policy and human rights.

The appointment is also a success for us MEPs. The European Parliament has been calling for this mandate for years and today's appointment raises our hopes for a strong and united voice for a European human rights policy.

It won't be easy to fulfil all expectations entirely. But the goal is set: The Special Representative must be a reliable voice for the people who suffer human rights violations. He should keep an eye on the bilateral and multilateral relations of the EU and monitor the implementation of human rights with international partners: in foreign and economic policy as well as in development cooperation. Last but not least, there must be coherence between the EU's internal and external policies as regards human rights.

I am looking forward to close and constructive cooperation between Mr Lambrinidis and the human rights committee. From now on we will work together to give human rights more prominence", said Ms Lochbihler on Wednesday.

Parliament called on the Council in June to appoint a high-level EU envoy with an established international reputation and a proven track record to fulfil a role MEPs have long considered essential.

The new Special Representative must have a strong, independent, flexible and sufficiently broad mandate, Parliament said. It should reflect EU human rights policy and cover areas including strengthening democracy, international justice, humanitarian law, abolition of the death penalty, freedom of expression, gender issues and children and armed conflict.

MEPs also called for adequate funding and staff to be allocated to the new EUSR, who should, they say, attend a hearing at Parliament and report regularly to it on the human rights situation in the world.

Contact :

Mary BRAZIER

BXL: (+32) 2 28 32733

STR: (+33) 3 881 74751

PORT: (+32) 498 98 35 87

EMAIL: foreign-press@europarl.europa.eu