



Subcommittee on Human Rights - Newsletter

Issue 31 (June - July 2017)

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Violence against women in the Western Balkans and Turkey, 8 June

Jointly with the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality



The meeting outlined the impact of increased and more coherent joint action from the Parliament towards the main human rights issues affecting the countries of the Western Balkans: lack of adequate protection, implementation gaps in the legislative framework, the need to change societal norms, differences between rural and urban areas, difficult access to justice and lack of political will to tackle this. The issue of impunity was

also raised, particularly in relation to Kosovo and including reparations for victims of sexual violence during the war.

The European Women's Lobby Coordination in Turkey outlined how in Turkey violence is still widespread because of the non-implementation of the Istanbul Convention and called for a more efficient and broader system of shelters for women in need. The Commission announced a major new regional project with UN Women and local civil society organisations to address violence against women.

[Programme](#)

Forced sterilisation in Peru, 21 June

The meeting dealt with the issue of the forced sterilisation of hundreds of thousands of women which happened in Peru under the presidency of Alberto Fujimori from 1990 to 2000. Ms Blanco Valer, specialist on indigenous issues, Latin America Solidarity Group, gave an account of the Fujimori government policy to alleviate poverty by organising forced sterilisation. Ms Carmen Nuñez-Borja, social researcher on gender, migration and human rights, gave a presentation on how this practice could be considered a crime against humanity. Ms María Elena Foronda, Chair of the Committee on Andean, Amazonian and Afroperuvian Peoples, Environment and Ecology of the Congress of the Republic of Peru, sent a short video message.

The outcome of the discussion was a decision by the Subcommittee to send two letters, one to the EEAS, asking for the inclusion of a discussion on forced sterilisation in the EU-Peru Human Rights Dialogue, and another to the President of the Peruvian Congress, requesting that an investigation be launched and justice brought to victims.

[Programme](#)



Hearing on human rights and development, 21 June

Jointly with the Committee on Development



The speakers stressed the link between respect for human rights and sustainable development as well as the indivisibility of human rights whether they be civil, political, economic, social or cultural. As all rights are inter-dependent, the violation of any one of these has a direct impact on the others. Despite all the international commitments regarding the right to development, a wide gap remains between commitments made and their actual implementation, which is ever widening in the current international environment.

At EU level, the idea of mainstreaming human rights in all policy areas is accepted and promoted, implying a people-centred policy approach, whereby the right to a decent livelihood is guaranteed together with active and meaningful participation in the decision-making process at all levels. However, the conclusion was that the gap between this declaration of principles and its practical implementation is still vast.

Programme



Exchange of views on the occasion of the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

Members heard from the Vice President of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) on the recent efforts of this specialised body regarding the prevention of torture and ill-treatment through monitoring and implementation of the CPT mandate in Council of Europe member states. The International Rehabilitation Council for Victims of Torture (IRCT) spoke of the challenges related to a comprehensive and holistic approach to fighting torture and reiterated the recommendations made by civil society to EU institutions regarding the topic.

Press release



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Exchange of views with Virginia Gamba, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, 21 June

Ms. Virginia Gamba was appointed Special Representative of the UN SG for Children and Armed Conflict in April 2017. During the exchange of views, she outlined the priorities of her mandate and expressed her readiness to cooperate with the Subcommittee in a more systematic manner, especially when DROI sends delegations to countries which are mentioned in the annex of the Children and Armed Conflict annual report of the UN Secretary General. This annex consists of a list of state and non-state actors that use children and commit violations of their rights in situations of armed conflicts. It has been the object of controversy after one state managed to avoid being mentioned in the list. She reassured the audience that this practice would not be repeated.

On the other hand, she expressed concern that as a result of current budget cuts at UN level many child protection officer posts within peacekeeping missions have been cut, severely endangering the situation of children in armed conflict.

Exchange of views with Idriss Jazairy, UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, 21 June

Mr Idriss Jazairy is the UN Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, and took office in May 2015. This came after the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution critical of unilateral coercive measures in September 2014. Mr Jazairy outlined his approach and mandate in his capacity as the first ever UN Special Rapporteur on the subject.

The ensuing discussion covered the appropriateness of imposing economic sanctions on the grounds of human rights violations, as these sanctions could in some cases lead to a worsening of the human rights situation. In Mr Jazairy's view unilateral coercive measures should be applied more restrictively, and he equally highlighted the importance of regular and timely monitoring in order to assess the effectiveness of the sanction.

Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) on the mid-term review of the EU Human Rights Action Plan, 21 June

Representatives of Amnesty International and Open Society European Policy Institute, leading NGOs closely involved in the follow-up implementation of the Action Plan, informed Members about the current situation. They stated their concerns about the lack of regular and structured information exchanges on the implementation process of the Annual Report and its mid-term review. The representatives also referred to some areas in which good progress is taking place, such as on torture and ill-treatment.

The EEAS, in turn, commented on the on-going process of the mid-term review, explaining that the review would be published shortly before the summer recess.



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Human Rights

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Women's Rights in Afghanistan, 12 July

Jointly with the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and the Delegation for relations with Afghanistan

PUBLIC HEARING
COMMITTEE ON WOMEN'S RIGHTS
AND GENDER EQUALITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
DELEGATION FOR RELATIONS WITH AFGHANISTAN
Wednesday 12.07.2017 – 15:00-17:00
V3327 INSTAL BUILDING ROOM 632



**WOMEN'S RIGHTS
IN AFGHANISTAN**

Chaired by
Pier Antonio PANZERI,
Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights
Vilija BLINKEVIČIŪTĖ,
Chair of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
Petras AUŠTREVICIUS,
Chair of the Delegation for relations with Afghanistan

On 12 July the DROI Subcommittee invited prominent figures in the field of women's rights in Afghanistan to discuss the current situation in the country. The hearing included contributions by video message from key specialists on the ground, Ms Latifa Ahmadi and Mr Abdul Wadood Pedram, who direct relevant women and human rights organisations in Afghanistan. Present in the room were Ms Horia Mosadeq, Amnesty International country researcher, Ms Malalai Joya, activist and former MP of the National Assembly of Afghanistan and Mr Mirco Günther, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Director in Afghanistan. The EEAS, the European Commission and the Ambassador of Afghanistan were also present.

During a two hour debate the different interlocutors briefed MEPs and other attendees about the current situation. Although some advances have been noted, especially in access to education, the situation in Afghanistan remains dire. The long-standing situation of conflict has contributed to serious and challenging security problems, which are linked to various types of women's rights violations. Although Afghanistan's Constitution includes a number of provisions directed to protecting women's rights, the implementation of existing legislation is problematic. The hearing also discussed ways in which the EU could continue to support women's rights

through its external action.

[Programme](#)

DROI delegation to the Philippines, 18-20 July

A four-member delegation from the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights (DROI), led by Soraya Post (S&D, Sweden) and composed of Ádám Kósa (EPP, Hungary), Josef Weidenholzer (S&D, Austria) and Rikke Karlsson (ECR, Denmark), visited the Philippines from 18-22 July. The visit took place in the framework of the recent deterioration of the human rights situation in the country, with the objective of the mission being to exchange views on issues of mutual interest and to get a real picture and a better understanding of the situation in the Philippines.

While welcoming the government's policy to battle the problem of illegal drugs, to alleviate poverty, to provide free access to university education and to invest in human capital in terms of health, including reproductive health, as well as the peace processes, the delegation in frank and constructive discussions expressed its concern about the high number of extrajudicial killings in the context of the war against drugs and the possible extension of Martial Law. The delegation also expressed its strong concern over draft bills in Congress to lower the age of criminal responsibility for children from 15 years to 9 years and to restore the death penalty.

In addition, MEPs visited a drug rehabilitation centre set up by the government, and strongly encouraged the authorities to continue developing prevention and rehabilitation mechanisms nationwide. The delegation also visited a centre for juvenile offenders and called firmly on the government to provide sufficient support.

[Press Statement](#)

Annual report on human rights and democracy in the world 2016 and the European Union's policy on the matter (2017/2122(INI))

Rapporteur: Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl

Consideration of draft working document in DROI, 12 July 2017

Deadline for tabling amendments, 7 September 2017 at 14.00

Consideration of amendments in DROI, 11 October 2017

Vote in AFET, 13 November 2017

Vote in Plenary, 13 December 2017

Corruption and human rights in third countries (2017/2028(INI))

Rapporteur: Petras Auštrevičius

Consideration of draft report in DROI, 12 April 2017

Deadline for tabling amendments, 2 May 2017 at 18.00

Consideration of amendments in DROI, 30 May 2017

Vote in AFET, 20 June 2017

Vote in Plenary, September 2017

Addressing human rights violations in the context of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including genocide (2016/2239(INI))

Rapporteur: Cristian Dan Preda

Consideration of draft report in DROI, 9 March 2017

Deadline for tabling amendments, 20 March at 18.00

Consideration of amendments in DROI, 11 April 2017

Vote in AFET, 30 May 2017 am

Vote in Plenary, July [Resolution adopted](#)

Statelessness in South and South East Asia (2016/2220(INI))

Rapporteur: Amjad Bashir

Consideration of draft report in DROI, 28 November 2016

Deadline for tabling amendments, 8 December 2016 at 12.00

Consideration of amendments in DROI, 24/25 January 2017

Vote in AFET, 10/11 April 2017

Vote in Plenary, June [Resolution adopted](#)



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Current opinions

The impact of international trade and the EU's trade policies on global value chains ([2016/2301\(INI\)](#))

Rapporteur: Pier Antonio Panzeri

Consideration of draft opinion in DROI, 3-4 May 2017
Deadline for tabling amendments, 11 May 2017 at 12.00
Consideration of amendments in DROI, 8 June 2017
Vote in AFET, 20 June 2017
Vote in Plenary, September 2017

Addressing shrinking civil society space in developing countries (2016/2324 (INI))

Rapporteur: Francisco Assis

Consideration of draft opinion in DROI, 30 May 2017
Deadline for tabling amendments, 31 May 2017 at 10.00
Consideration of amendments in DROI, 21 June 2017
Vote in AFET, 11 July 2017
Vote in DEVE of final report, 30 August 2017
Vote in Plenary, September/October 2017

Urgency resolutions

July 2017 - Strasbourg

- The cases of Nobel laureate Lui Xiaobo and Lee Ming-che; Eritrea, notably the cases of Abune Antonios and Dawit Isaak; Burundi

June 2017 - Strasbourg

- The case of Afgan Mukhtarli and situation of media in Azerbaijan; Pakistan, notably the situation of human rights defenders and the death penalty; Human rights situation in Indonesia

[All resolutions](#)

Forthcoming DROI meetings 2017

Monday 4 September p.m.
Monday 25 September p.m.
Wednesday 11 October a.m. and p.m.
Wednesday 22 November a.m. and p.m. and Thursday 23 November a.m.
Thursday 7 December a.m.

[Calendar of DROI meetings 2017](#)

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