

Newsletter September 2018



Petitions on the situation in Venezuela

The Committee examined three petitions concerning the situation in Venezuela at its meeting of 3 September 2018. Two petitioners were heard on the subject.

The first petitioner highlighted the economic, social and political crisis in Venezuela and argued that the EU should foster greater dialogue in the country, in order to ensure that freedom of opinion is upheld. The petitioner also asked the EU to support non-governmental organizations to assist the Venezuelan population in relation to health care and first aid and to continue blocking

bank accounts and properties of those held responsible for the erosion of democracy in Venezuela.

The second petitioner condemned the human rights violations in Venezuela and urged the EU to react against what she described as the violent actions of the Venezuelan government and the ongoing economic, social, health and political crises in the country.

In its reply to the petitioners, the European Commission stated that the EU intends to continue its work in support of a peaceful negotiated solution in full respect of democracy, rule of law and human rights, as the foundation for any lasting solution to the crisis in Venezuela.

As a follow-up to the petitions, the Committee decided to send a letter to the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Ms Federica Mogherini, highlighting the importance of swift EU mediation and, in particular, on the humanitarian situation in Venezuela and subsequently to close the petitions.

Upcoming PETI activities in October:

- Public Hearing on the rights of persons with disabilities
- Meeting with Bundestag Petitions Committee (9 Oct 2018)

Votes on Oral Questions to the Commission and to the Council on the role of the German Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) in cross-border family disputes

The Committee adopted two Oral Questions on the Jugendamt following a large number of petitions by non-German parents focussing on cross-border custody disputes in Germany.

Members ask the Council and the Commission to explain the measures in place to protect the best interests of the child in cross-border family disputes, such as checks on the non-discriminatory nature of procedures, cross-border dialogues and training of social services staff.



Petition on a planned pyrolysis-based waste processing plant in the green park of Sturovo in Slovakia

The petition concerns the construction of a pyrolysis-based incinerator, for which authorisation is in progress, in the green park of Sturovo in Slovakia. According to the petitioners, this incinerator will cause cross-border environmental damage including air and water pollution, representing a health hazard for citizens of both Hungary and Slovakia. The petitioners argue that the technology proposed is not safe and deviates significantly from the “Best Accessible Technology standards” of the EU, and is in breach of Directive 2011/92/EU.



The Commission informed Members that the project had not yet been authorised by the Slovak authorities and encouraged the petitioners to raise their concerns directly in the ongoing environmental impact assessment (EIA) process. The Commission also stated that it is currently developing a new set of BAT conclusions setting stricter emission levels, which will have to be observed by all existing and new installations.

PETI decided to keep the petition open and seek an opinion from ENVI, while keeping in close contact with the Commission on this issue. It also decided to send a letter to the Slovak government, emphasizing the importance of conducting the EIA in accordance with the Aarhus Convention, in particular as concerns the right of the public to access environmental information.

Fact-finding visit to Doñana, Spain (19-21 Sep 2018)

PETI delegation composed of Pál Csáky (EPP) and Miltiadis Kyrkos (S&D) alongside 3 ex-officio Members: Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (EPP), Soledad Cabezón Ruiz (S&D) and Florent Marcellesi (GREENS/EFA). In the picture also the Andalusian Minister for the environment, José Fiscal López.



Next PETI meeting: - 8-9 October 2018

See [agenda](#), [documents](#) and [live broadcast](#)

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