

## NEWSLETTER – 26 January 2023

### WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

Dear readers,

During our last meeting, the Rapporteur, Ms Sandra KALNIETE, presented her



draft report, which marks an important part of our mandate. The report was presented against the backdrop of the outrageous corruption scandal known as Qatargate.

This corruption network, aimed at influencing our votes and our decisions for the sake of foreign countries like Qatar or Morocco, constitutes a typical case of foreign interference in our democratic processes. It is a direct attack on the European Parliament and European democracy in general.

The INGE2 Special Committee is going to focus on this scandal in the weeks and months to come. Our next public hearing on January 26th on "Recent cases of foreign interference in the European Parliament - Allegations of Corruption" will be the first official committee hearing about the Qatargate to be held in the Parliament. The meeting is organised jointly with the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET), the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE), and in association with the Delegation for relations with the Arab Peninsula (DARP) and the Delegation for relations with Maghreb countries (DMAG).

The recent revelations illustrate how pervasive and corrosive the attempts to influence European democracies are. They also showcase the need to reinforce transparency and accountability within our institutions.

It is time to prove that our democracy is not for sale!

**Raphaël GLUCKSMANN**

### ON THE AGENDA

26 January

#### **Exchange of views on "Recent Cases of Foreign Interference in the European Parliament - Allegations of Corruption" - 14:00-17:00 (SPINELLI 1G-3)**

*Jointly with the Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET) and the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE), and in association with the Delegation for relations with the Arab Peninsula (DARP) and the Delegation for relations with Maghreb countries (DMAG)*

During this exchange of views, the Special Committee will discuss together with several committees and delegations the recent cases of foreign interference in the European Parliament, including the allegations of corruption.

Invited experts:

**Dr Irene FERNANDEZ-MOLINA** is a Senior Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Exeter since 2015. Dr FERNANDEZ-MOLINA specialises in North Africa, EU foreign policy and Euro-Mediterranean relations. Additionally, she has expertise in the international relations of the Global South, and the foreign policy of dependent and/or cooperation of authoritarian regimes. Dr FERNANDEZ-MOLINA already collaborated with the EEAS for training on the southern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, or non-profit organisations such as CITpax or Search For Common Ground.

**Mr Christian CHESNOT** is a journalist specialising in the economic and political affairs of the Middle East and Arab World, currently working at the international department of Radio France. Former hostage of the Islamic Army in Iraq, Mr CHESNOT has written several books since the 1990s' such as

## Special Committee on Foreign Interference in all Democratic Processes in the European Union including Disinformation

*“Nos très chers émirs”*, in collaboration with Georges Malbrunot, and which received the 2017 ethical award from the French anti-corruption association Anticor. More recently, he published *“Qatar Papers”* in 2019 and *“Qatar: Les secrets d’une influence planétaire en 100 questions”* in 2022.

**Mr Nick AIOSSA** is the Deputy Director and Head of Policy and Advocacy at Transparency International EU (TI EU). Before his position as Director, he previously served as the Head of EU Political Integrity for Transparency International EU, where he worked on issues concerning political integrity, rule of law and misuse of EU funds. Prior to his career at TI EU, he worked at the European Parliament, where he covered issues including human rights and transatlantic relations.

### NEXT MEETINGS

*Tuesday 28 February 2023*

- **Consideration of amendments**
- **Hearing on “Climate change disinformation - International disinformation impact on the EU’s climate goals”**
- **Exchange of views on “Setting Global Standards to Protect the Integrity of Information”**

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