

MAIN POINTS OF THE DROI AGENDA

Hearing on Sport and Human Rights 1
 Human rights in Central Asia 1
 Exchange of views with Habib Essid, Prime Minister of Tunisia 2
 Human rights situation in Egypt 2
 Human rights in Venezuela 2
 Respect of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Gaza Conflict 2
 Human rights situation in Ukraine 3
 Human rights in Angola 3
 Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights 3
 Human rights conditionalities & the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) 3
 Exchange of views with H.E. Mr Joachim Ruecker, President of the Human Rights Council 4
 Human rights situation in Cambodia 4
 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought 2015 4
 Work In Progress 4
 Human rights-related resolutions adopted in plenary 2015 5
 DROI Calendar of meetings 2015 5

Hearing on Sport and Human Rights, 6 May
Jointly with the Committee on Culture



The hearing focused on the role of major sporting federations and associations in the protection and promotion of human rights, with an eye to the on-going reforms in the International Olympic Committee (concerning the Olympic Charter and the Olympic Agenda 2020) and FIFA (regarding the award criteria

for host countries and cities).

Members stressed the need to increase openness, transparency, accountability, non-discrimination and the protection and promotion of human rights, including labour rights. They stressed that upholding human rights and supporting responsible behaviour and transparency in this context should be considered not as being of a political nature but an attempt and obligation to protect universal human rights, as enshrined in conventions and embodied in the governance principles of the major sporting bodies, first and foremost the Olympic Charter.

[Press Release](#)

Exchange of views on human rights in Central Asia, 6 May

The exchange was particularly timely as it came ahead of the recent urgency resolutions on Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan and given the fundamental role of the European Parliament in monitoring or giving its consent to international agreements (enhanced PCA with Kazakhstan, PCA with Turkmenistan, textile protocol with Uzbekistan). It also provided useful synergies with the on-going activities in AFET and INTA, whose rapporteur on the Textile Protocol with



Uzbekistan actively participated. In the debate the focus was on the EU's political leverage in the region with a view to promoting and protecting human rights. The invited experts presented country-specific updates and recommendations on Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan against the backdrop of the EU's Central Asia Strategy, bearing in mind that the Council Conclusions were expected in June, and that the AFET INI report was still to be drafted.

Exchange of views with Habib Essid, Prime Minister of Tunisia, 28 May



The brief introduction made by Elmar Brok was followed by introductory remarks by Elena Valenciano and Jaromír Stetina, Vice-Chair of SEDE. In this very well-attended joint meeting the Tunisian transition, including elections, was acknowledged by Members as being exemplary in the region. The debate focused in particular on the security challenges, the fight against terrorism and tackling migration flows.

Exchange of views on the human rights situation in Egypt, 28 May

The different perspectives on the topic presented by the two speakers stimulated an active debate in which Members expressed their concerns regarding freedom of association, media freedom and violence against women. They also called on Egypt to impose a moratorium on the death penalty.

Hearing on human rights in Venezuela, 16 June



During the long debate the attention was drawn to the Venezuelan government's crack-down on the protests last year, the access to justice for victims from both sides, and the right of all to participate in political life.

The DROI Chair stressed that while it is neither the European Parliament's intention nor its role to intervene in Venezuela's internal affairs, Parliament should indeed be looking into violations of the rights of the Venezuelan people. A considerable number of MEPs expressed concern about the attitude of the Maduro Government, especially regarding fundamental liberties and human rights activists, while others pointed to double standards and the purportedly political instrumentalization of the current situation in Venezuela.

[Press release](#)

Exchange of views on the respect of human rights and international humanitarian law in the Gaza conflict, 17 June

Taking into account the upcoming DROI mission to Israel and Palestine (which took place in July) DROI Members were briefed by two NGO speakers, representing very different points of view, regarding the conduct of Israeli military forces in the Gaza conflict of summer 2014. The basis of the debate was a recent major report published by the NGO Breaking the Silence. Members stressed the need to go beyond mere statements in order to achieve progress in terms of



Issue No. 22, May - July 2015

compliance with human rights and International Humanitarian Law norms.

Exchange of views on the human rights situation in Ukraine, 17 June

The exchange of views, with a focus on the impact of the on-going conflict, was requested by Members in preparation for the upcoming DROI mission and there was active participation by the Chair and several Members of the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Association Committee (PAC). Several Members proposed a visit to the Eastern part of Ukraine as part of the afore-mentioned DROI mission to Ukraine. Both the civil society representatives and the UNHCR emphasised the growing challenges in terms of access and humanitarian aid, as well as the widespread abuses.

The exchange focused on documenting violations, the situation of internally displaced people, the ICC and Ukraine's prospects of ratifying the Rome Statute. The case of Nadiya Savchenko, addressed in an EP urgency resolution in April 2015, was also raised.

Members pleaded strongly in favour of further "monitoring sessions" on the human rights situation and war crimes in the currently occupied territories, to be undertaken in close cooperation, if not jointly, by DROI and the PAC.

Human rights in Angola, 2 July

Attention was paid to the worsening human rights situation exemplified by intensifying harassment and intimidation of human rights defenders and the lack of proper investigations by the Angolan authorities, even in the most serious cases. A picture of a country wracked by widespread corruption, weak civil society and the absence of the rule of law was presented.

The effectiveness of assistance by the EU Delegation in Luanda was also questioned, in particular when it comes to supporting human rights defenders or trial observations despite the existing EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders.

Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights, 2 July

Members had a follow-up discussion with the EEAS on the study on Occupation/annexation of a territory: Respect for international humanitarian law and human rights.

As agreed at the previous DROI meeting, when an external study by Professor Wrangé was presented, the EEAS Legal Service provided its assessment of the legal argumentation contained in the study. Questions from DROI Members focused on the issue of how consistent the EU's policy is concerning situations of annexation, occupation or disputed territories. The EEAS Legal Service presented a different line of argumentation concerning the three case studies (Ukraine, Gaza and Western Sahara), emphasising the differences in the three cases, and referring specifically to the legal opinions of the Institutions as prepared at the time of the lengthy parliamentary debate on the EU-Morocco fisheries agreement.

Hearing on human rights conditionalities in the context of regional trade agreements with African countries, 14 July

Jointly with the Committee on International Trade:



The hearing was greatly welcomed by participants for the synergies between INTA and DROI. A comparison between the numerous human rights clauses in different Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) was made, and the experts underlined the need to improve and make more coherent the application of

these clauses.

Given the reference in all EPAs to the Cotonou Agreement, which will expire in 2020, several scenarios were discussed. Members underlined the lack of genuine follow-up in terms of the monitoring of the impact of trade agreements concluded by the EU.



Exchange of views with H.E. Mr Joachim Ruecker, 14 July

During the DROI delegation's visit to the UN Human Rights Council regular session last March, Mrs Elena Valenciano, the DROI Chair, had invited Mr Ruecker, President of the UN Human Rights Council, to an exchange of views with members of the Subcommittee. He gave a general assessment of the June/July session, which included country specific and thematic issues, followed by a question and answer session. Questions raised by Members included migrants' rights, the Gaza situation, and Roma people's rights, as well as social and economic rights.

The exchange of views was considered mutually beneficial and Ambassador Ruecker welcomed the Chair's initiative and proposed further strengthening the cooperation between DROI and the HRC. He also invited DROI members to come more often (there are three main sessions a year) to the HRC in Geneva.

Human rights in Cambodia, 14 July

Members held an exchange of views on the current human rights situation in Cambodia just a day after the Cambodian National Assembly adopted the new controversial Law on Association and NGOs (LANGO), the European Parliament had adopted an urgency resolution on the topic a week earlier. The two civil society speakers reiterated the well-known concerns relating to the new law and the shrinking space for civil society. The exchange also provided an opportunity to touch upon land rights and land-grabbing as well as the situation of trade unions and related legislative proposals.

Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought 2015



The Notice to Members launching the Sakharov Prize 2015 was sent out on 1 July, with the deadline for nomination of candidates set for 10 September 2015.

There are 6 nominations for the 2015 Sakharov Prize:

- Edna ADAN ISMAIL
- Raif BADAWI
- Democratic opposition in Venezuela embodied by the *Mesa de la Unidad Democrática* and political prisoners
- Boris NEMTSOV
- Nadiya SAVCHENKO
- Edward SNOWDEN, Antoine DELTOUR, Stéphanie GIBAUD

[List](#) of candidates including biographies

2015 Sakharov calendar

Presentation of nominees in a joint meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Development and the Subcommittee on Human Rights (open to all Members) - Monday 28 September

Vote on three finalists in a joint meeting of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Development - Thursday 15 October

Conference of Presidents' decision on final Laureate - Thursday 29 October

Joint AFET/DEVE/DROI meeting with 2015 Laureate(s) - Monday 14 December at 19h30

Sakharov Prize award ceremony 2015 in Plenary - Wednesday 16 December at 12h00

For further details please see the link to the [Statute](#)

Recent work / Work in Progress

The EU's new approach to human rights and democracy – evaluating the activities of the European Endowment for Democracy (EED) since its establishment 2014/2231(INI)

Rapporteur: Andrzej Grzyb

Report: [A8-0177/2015](#)

[Resolution](#) adopted in plenary on 9 July



Human rights and technology: impact of intrusion and surveillance systems on human rights in third countries 2014/2232(INI)

Rapporteur: Marietje Schaake

Report : [A8-0178/2015](#)

Adoption in plenary: foreseen for September 2015

Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World 2014 and the European Union's policy on the matter

Rapporteur: Cristian Dan Preda

Consideration of draft report in DROI: 1 October

Deadline for amendments : 12 October at 16.00

Consideration of amendments in DROI: 12 November

Vote in AFET: 16 November

Vote in Plenary: December

Trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

(COM(2014)0001 – C8-0014/2014

– 2014/0005(COD))

Rapporteur: Barbara Lochbihler

Opinion : [PE555.011v02-00](#)

Timetable : to be confirmed

Preparing for the World Humanitarian Summit: Challenges and opportunities for humanitarian assistance (2015/2051 (INI))

Rapporteur: Elena Valenciano

Timetable : to be confirmed

Human Rights related resolutions adopted in plenary 2015

July 2015

Situation in Yemen; Situation in Burundi; the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), in particular the case of two detained human rights activists Yves Makwambala and Fred Bauma; Bahrain, in particular the case of Nabeel Rajab; Situation of two Christian pastors in Sudan

June 2015

Paraguay: the legal aspects related to the child pregnancy; Syria: situation in Palmyra and the case of Mazen Darwish; Situation in Nepal after the earthquakes

May 2015

Swaziland, the case of human rights activists Thulani Maseko and Bheki Makhubu; The plight of Rohingya refugees, including mass graves in Thailand; Zimbabwe, the case of human rights defender Itai Dzamara

[Link to all the resolutions](#)

Forthcoming DROI Meetings

The next DROI meetings will take place on the following days:

Tuesday 22.09.2015 am Tuesday 22.09.2015 pm

Thursday 01.10.2015 am

Thursday 15.10.2015 am

Thursday 22.10.2015 am

Thursday 12.11.2015 am

Thursday 19.11.2015 am

Tuesday 01.12.2015 am Tuesday 01.12.2015 pm

Link to [DROI Calendar 2015](#)

LINKS:

[DROI Webpage](#)

[DROI Live](#)

[DROI studies](#)

[Subscribe/Unsubscribe](#) to the DROI Newsletter

[DROI on Facebook:](#)

[Twitter](#)