



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 5 March 2013

7143/13

**PE 103
PESC 259
COASI 30
COMAG 31
COHOM 35
COWEB 33**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations

Subject: Summary record of the meeting of the European Parliament **Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)** held in Brussels on 4 March 2013
Chair: Mr Paşcu (EPP, RO)

I. Exchange of views with José Ramos-Horta, UN Secretary- General's Representative for Guinea- Bissau (former President of Timor-Leste and Nobel Peace Prize laureate)

Mr Ramos-Horta outlined the serious situation in Guinea Bissau where, he explained, not only the political leadership had failed, but also the international community. He said that, even if there was no military confrontation, no ethnic divide and no religious extremism, the state remained dysfunctional and successive governments had failed to deliver. He considered that the way ahead included a number of steps: the adoption of a road map leading to elections in November-December, the formation of an inclusive government with a charismatic prime minister, the reconfiguration of the UN mission and rebuilding the state from scratch. He welcomed the EU reaction to the *coup d'état*, i.e. the adoption of sanctions

but the continuation of the cooperation with NGOs and civil society. He called on the EU not to freeze the funds and not to redirect them to Mali, but to channel them through UN agencies. Mr Ramos-Horta challenged the view that Guinea-Bissau would be a narco-State in West Africa. He said that the drug epicentres were Latin America and Europe and Guinea-Bissau was only a victim.

In the debate that followed MEPs voiced concern not only about the humanitarian situation in the country, but also about the links between the situation in West Africa and countries such as Libya and Mali - be it Islamic terrorism or drug and arms trafficking. Mr Ramos-Horta insisted on the importance of EU assistance, in terms of both humanitarian aid and help in setting up air and maritime surveillance to fight illegal trafficking. He also expressed some hope regarding the launch of the electoral process - which, in his view, should be entirely managed by the international community - and the reorganization of the whole State that should follow.

II. Exchange of views with Rupert Joy, newly-appointed Head of the EU Delegation in Morocco (in compliance with the Declaration on Political Accountability of the HR/VP)

In camera. See separate document.

III. Debrief by Marisa Matias on the 11th EP-Lebanon Inter-parliamentary meeting in Lebanon, 11-15 February

Ms Matias (GUE/NGL, PT) said that the visit took place in a frank atmosphere and that the EP delegation could meet a number of high-level political authorities. She said that the issue of Syrian refugees was high on the agenda and was at the core of a humanitarian crisis in the country, as Lebanon was the only country that had left its border with Syria open. She also explained that Lebanon was reforming its electoral law, with a view to holding elections in June and that several proposals were still on the table.

The main issue raised in the debate that followed was that of the inclusion of Hezbollah on the EU terrorist list. This option was called for by Mr Kirilov (S&D, BU), who recalled that Hezbollah was considered to be behind the terrorist attack on a bus in Bulgaria. But a

number of Members (Mr David (EPP, PT), Ms De Keyser (S&D, BE), Mr Pöttering (PPE, DE), Mr Salafranca (PPE, ES)) challenged this view and said that the EU had to be extremely cautious not to interfere in a very delicate situation, in a country where Hezbollah were participating in the government coalition, quite apart from the fact that they were playing a role in the Middle East peace process. Ms Matias concurred and added that, during the visit, the Prime Minister had said that he was ready to work with the Bulgarian authorities to bring to justice those responsible for the terrorist attack. In her view, it was important not to interfere and not to create unnecessary problems, adding that the EP delegation had not taken a position on the issue of the inclusion of Hezbollah on the EU terrorist list.

The issue of the reform of the electoral law was also raised in the debate, with Ms De Keyser wondering if the recommendations issued by the last EU elections observation mission had been taken into account. Ms Matias recalled that they were just recommendations but Lebanon authorities had shown a willingness to work with the EU and to invite a mission on the occasion of the upcoming elections.

Mr Tannock asked about Lebanon's position on the Syrian conflict. Ms Matias replied that the Lebanese authorities wanted to avoid any partisan attitude towards the war: in the country there were indeed different positions on the conflict but the priority was preserving national unity.

IV. Votes

a) Women's rights in the Balkan accession countries

AFET/7/11679, 2012/2255(INI)

Rapporteur for the opinion: Emine Bozkurt (S&D, NL)

Responsible: FEMM – Marije Cornelissen (Greens/EFA, NL)

The opinion was adopted by 29 votes in favour, one against and two abstentions.

b) EU-China Agreement (Articles XXIV and XXVIII of GATT 1994) relating to the modification of concessions in the schedules of Bulgaria and Romania in the course of their accession to the EU

AFET/7/11163 *** 2012/0304(NLE) COM(2012)0641

Rapporteur for the opinion: Charles Tannock (ECR, UK)

Responsible: INTA – Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL, DE)

The opinion was adopted by 28 votes in favour and one against.

V. Next meeting(s)

5 March 2013, 15.30 – 16.30 (Brussels)
