



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Brussels, 26 September 2013

14104/13

**PE 420
PESC 1152
COASI 144
COEST 292
COAFR 288
COHOM 217
RELEX 866
ECOFIN 838
COMAG 91
MED 29
JAI 832
ESPACE 71
COSDP 908**

NOTE

from: General Secretariat of the Council
to: Delegations

Subject: Summary record of the meeting of the European Parliament's **Committee on Foreign Affairs (AFET)** held in Brussels on 23-24 September 2013
Chairs: Mr Brok (EPP, DE), Mr Salafranca (EPP, ES) and Mr Kovatchev (EPP, BG)

- I. Exchange of views with Michel Arrion, newly appointed Head of the EU Delegation to Nigeria**
This item was debated in camera. Please see separate report.
- II. Exchange of views with David O'Sullivan, Chief Operating Officer of the EEAS, on the state of play of the discussions on the provisional application of the Association Agreement with Ukraine**
This item was debated in camera. Please see separate report.

III. Exchange of views with Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission, on the assessment by the Venice Commission of legislation adopted by the Ukrainian Rada

This item was debated in camera. Please see separate report.

IV. Exchange of views with Stavros Lambrinidis, EU Special Representative for Human Rights, on his recent activities

This item was debated in camera. Please see separate report.

V. Reports

a) European Neighbourhood Policy, working towards a stronger partnership: EP's position on the 2012 progress reports

AFET/7/13314, 2013/2621(RSP)

Rapporteur: Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (PPE, PL)

Co-rapporteur(s): Pier Antonio Panzeri (S&D, IT)

The two co-rapporteurs announced that 460 amendments had been tabled. They could be divided into different categories (those improving the text, those going beyond the ENP remit, those on specific countries). Mr Saryusz-Wolski said that his part of the report might include a paragraph giving the EP's approval for provisional application of the association agreement with Ukraine should the conditions for its signature be met (pointing out that EP consent to the provisional application of international agreements was based on a "gentlemen's agreement" with the Council).

Then the chair announced that the Head of the EU delegation to Georgia, Mr. Philip Dimitrov, was in the room and could present the situation in Georgia, which he did, putting special emphasis on the upcoming challenges, notably the presidential elections and the planned resignation of the Prime Minister. He paid tribute to the role played by the former ruling coalition in bringing the country closer to the EU and warned that the pro-European forces could still be marginalised. Mr Saryusz-Wolski called on the EU not to be taken by

surprise again as it was when Russia invaded Georgia in 2008. He added that the Prime Minister's move to resign after the presidential elections was actually a way to continue to control the country from behind the scenes, which, in his opinion, was unconstitutional. The Head of Delegation replied that the EU could not affect the choice of the electorate but could use its moral authority and communication strategy to support the country on its pro-European path.

This "bilateral" exchange of views prompted protests from Ms Neyts (ALDE, BE) and Ms Koppa (S&D, EL), who noted that the presence of the Ambassador had not been scheduled in the agenda for the meeting nor duly announced. They argued that the debate was turning into a hearing on Georgia, which was misplaced in a discussion on the broader ENP, let alone the fact that the ENP itself was not a tool for supporting one side or the other in any given country. Mr Kovatchev, who was in the chair, supported by Mr Brok (EPP, DE), cut short this procedural debate by saying that AFET should take advantage of the Ambassador's presence and pay tribute to his work.

Most of those intervening in the debate on the ENP report expressed their views on the situation in specific countries. Comments on the role of Lebanon in the Syrian conflict went along with comments on the requirements Ukraine had to fulfil to get the association agreement signed.

Mr Tannock's intervention brought the debate back to consideration of the broader concept of the ENP. As the very first rapporteur on the ENP almost ten years before, he noted that the one-size-fits-all approach was convenient but not feasible, and that the ENP needed a very flexible approach. He conceded that he still had doubts as to whether the whole ENP had not been conceived with the final objective of keeping Ukraine out of the EU and was therefore a reaction to the geo-political situation of ten years before. Ms Neyts voiced her scepticism on the report, feeling that the two co-rapporteurs had been given a mission impossible. She noted that, on one hand, the situation in each country of the ENP was summarised in one sentence, and, on the other hand, the situation in most of those countries was changing from one day to the next. So she wondered what purpose was served by this kind of report, on both the dimensions of the ENP. The co-rapporteurs strongly defended their work. Mr Panzeri said that the choice of a single report for the two dimensions had

been deliberate, in order to avoid an "East vs South approach" as had occurred in the past. The need to continuously update the text until final adoption was not in itself a problem. For Mr Saryusz-Wolski what was important was the general message (the wood), not the specific sentence on each country (the trees). He stressed that the ENP - whose final objective was to build a ring of friends around the EU - was of utmost importance and a genuine litmus test for the CFSP: if the EU failed there, it could forget about being a global player. He acknowledged that the ENP could be improved but it was nonetheless a much needed policy, now more than ever, because of the Russian attitude. Enlargement being impossible right now, in his view a robust ENP was better than nothing.

b) The Annual Report from the Council to the European Parliament on the Common Foreign and Security Policy in 2012

AFET/7/12555, 2013/2081(INI)

Rapporteur: Elmar Brok (EPP, DE)

Responsible: AFET – Opinions: BUDG – Nadezhda Neynsky (PPE, BG)

The rapporteur announced the drafting of a number of compromise amendments. The debate that followed included topics as diverse as the preparation for the December European Council, the European perspective of the Western Balkans and the spy scandal.

c) The future of EU-ASEAN relations

AFET/7/13296, 2013/2148(INI)

Rapporteur: Reinhard Bütikofer (Verts/ALE, DE)

Deadline for tabling amendments: 10 September 2013, 12.00

The rapporteur announced that 112 amendments had been tabled on his draft report and considered that a considerable number of them could be included in compromise amendments. He said that there was very little on trade in his report, and that that had been done on purpose. He added that in general he had refrained from making reference to individual countries, unless they had a symbolic importance for the whole region. The shadow rapporteurs underlined their respective priorities, but all of them were supportive of the line taken by the rapporteur. The only issue that divided MEPs was the proposal to set up an EU-ASEAN inter-parliamentary assembly: a good idea for some

(EPP), an over ambitious and expensive body for others (ALDE, ECR). The rapporteur defended his proposal by saying that not setting up such an assembly could be misinterpreted by the ASEAN countries as a sign that they were of less relevance than other world regions with which the EP had institutionalised relations.

The ALDE group welcomed the rapporteur's idea of creating the post of Head of the EU Delegation to ASEAN.

The EEAS and Commission representatives both commended the rapporteur for his balanced report, which was very much in line with their thinking.

d) EU guarantee to the European Investment Bank against losses under financing operations supporting investment projects outside the Union

AFET/7/12839, ***I 2013/0152(COD) COM(2013)0293 – C7-0145/2013

Rapporteur, for the opinion: Jacek Protasiewicz (PPE, PL)

Responsible: BUDG – Ivailo Kalfin (S&D)

The rapporteur explained that the purpose of the decision was to renew and revise the budgetary guarantee granted by the EU to the EIB for risks of a sovereign and political nature in connection with its operations carried out outside the EU. He insisted - as the Commission had done in its proposal - on the importance of linking the activities of the EIB to the general principles guiding European external action as outlined in Article 21 TEU. He also called on the EIB to strengthen its transparency and responsiveness. The shadow rapporteurs supported the draft opinion. Mr Watson (ALDE, UK) noted in particular that a great amount of money was at stake (up to EUR 30 billion over the next seven years) and considered it crucial that the EIB align its financing on EU principles and values. For example, he questioned the EIB's financing of gas companies that by their very nature were already making of huge profits. He also called for greater transparency so that the EU could access EIB documents. The EIB representative commended the rapporteur for what he considered a balanced report. On transparency, he argued that the EIB was already in line with EU legislation, but agreements with third countries could only be published with their consent. He reassured MEPs that the EIB policy was respectful of EU standards and values.

e) **Macro-financial assistance to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**

AFET/7/12674, ***I 2013/0128(COD) COM(2013)0242 – C7-0119/2013

Rapporteur for the opinion: Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (ADLE, BE)

Responsible: INTA – Vital Moreira (S&D)

Ms Neyts stressed the importance of EU financial assistance for Jordan, especially at a time when the country was suffering heavily because of the Syrian conflict. The Commission representative fully shared the rapporteur's position and supported her amendments, with the exception of amendment 5 on the eligibility criteria.

f) **Comprehensive Partnership and cooperation between the European Community and its Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Indonesia, of the other part**

AFET/7/12572, *** 2013/0120(NLE) COM(2013)0230

Rapporteur: Ana Gomes (S&D, PT)

Responsible: AFET – Opinions: INTA – Decision: no opinion

Deadline for tabling amendments: 1 October 2013, 12.00

The chair complained that, while the negotiations had been concluded in 2007 and the agreement signed in 2009, the Council was only now going to ask for EP approval. He considered that the EP should have been consulted earlier, just after the signing. He recalled that the same had happened with the Colombia-Peru agreement. The rapporteur concurred with the chair. She added that the ratification process by Member States was also extremely slow: two Member States - France and Greece - plus a third, Croatia, had still to ratify the agreement. She wanted to know the reasons for that. Mr Watson (ALDE, UK) regretted that such a long time was needed for the treaty to enter into force, at a point in time when, due to the high unemployment rate, Europe would have a lot to gain from contractual relations with a dynamic country such as Indonesia. He recommended urgent action by "peers" in the Council towards those Member States that still had to ratify. The EEAS representative, while saying that he could not speak for Member States, regretted the delay in the procedure. He noted that if two Member States had not yet ratified, that was due to internal technical problems, not for political reasons. He added that Croatia did not have to ratify. He recalled that EP consent was a key element and commended the EP for the attention given to this issue.

On the substance of the agreement, the rapporteur recalled the amazing progress made by Indonesia, which was a strategic country in the region. She added that Indonesia was living proof that democracy and Islam were compatible. Both sides, she concluded, had to gain from the conclusion of such an agreement. The EEP and ALDE shadow rapporteurs (Ms Oomen-Ruijten, NL and Mr Watson, UK) concurred on the tremendous potential represented by the agreement. The Greens' shadow rapporteur, Mr Bütikofer (DE), advised against trying to lecture Indonesia and the rapporteur agreed that there were areas, such as implementation of the convention on migrants, where the EU could learn from Indonesia. The EEAS representative recalled that this was the first post-Lisbon PCA and welcomed the well-balanced EP report.

g) Framework Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Armenia on the general principles for the participation of the Republic of Armenia in Union programmes

AFET/7/10713, *** 2012/0247(NLE) 16469/2012 – C7-0009/2013

Rapporteur: Tomasz Piotr Poręba (ECR, PL)

Responsible: AFET –

Deadline for tabling amendments: 25 September 2013, 12.00

Mr Tannock (CR, UK), speaking on behalf of the rapporteur, invited fellow MEPs not to link this issue with that of the association agreement, and Armenia's recent decision to join the customs union with Russia. He considered indeed that, despite Armenia's decision, the EU should continue to work with this neighbour. This line was approved by the shadow rapporteurs (and other MEPs), who agreed that the EU should remain open because the ultimate beneficiaries of the EU programmes were the people. Two MEPs took a rather different view. Mr Preda (EPP, RO) strongly disagreed with the rapporteur's approach. He considered that what Armenia had done was a clear unfriendly gesture and that the EU's response should be firm: while not closing the door completely, certainly not leaving it completely open either. Mr Vajgl (ALDE, SI) was less severe: in his view, the EU's door should stay open in order not to drive Armenia into isolation, but at the same time Armenia should not be seen as Russia's victim but as responsible for its own decisions. This

consideration led to a debate on the degree of pressure Russia had exercised over Armenia: while for Mr Vuljanić (GUE/NGL, CR) there had been severe pressure, for Mr Kirilov (S&D, BG) there had been none, and Armenia had taken its own decision. Mr Tannock disagreed with Mr Preda and said that Armenia should not be treated differently from Iceland, another country that had decided against moving closer to the EU. That, he stressed, was a sovereign decision and the EU should refrain from adopting the Soviet approach of a zero sum game and instead continue cooperation with Armenia. He also disagreed with those who considered that Armenia's decision was not the result of a precise form of pressure from Russia.

Another issue raised in the debate was Ms Lunacek's (Greens/EFA, AT) concerns at the impact of Armenia's participation in EU programmes in Nagorno-Karabakh. She recalled that Armenia was occupying 20% of Azerbaijan's territory and that, if the agreement was concluded, citizens holding an Armenian passport and living in the occupied zone would benefit from EU programmes while Azeri citizens would not (because no similar agreement was planned for Azerbaijan). She noted that this problem was similar to that of citizens holding a Russian passport in the occupied regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia and she called for this concern to be raised in the explanatory statement. However, Mr Tannock refused to do so on the ground that the status of Nagorno-Karabakh - whether an occupied territory or not - was not clear in international law, irrespective of what Ms Lunacek might think. Moreover, this was a non-issue because the number of Azeris living in Nagorno-Karabakh was extremely limited.

VI. Votes

a) The situation of human rights in the Sahel region

AFET/7/11930, 2013/2020(INI)

Rapporteur: Charles Tannock (ECR, UK)

The report, as modified by a high number of oral and written amendments and an unprecedentedly high number of compromise amendments, was adopted unanimously with 13 abstentions.

b) Mid-term review of the Stockholm Programme

AFET/7/12193, 2013/2024(INI)

Rapporteur for the opinion: Jean-Jacob Bicep (Verts/ALE, FR)

The opinion, as modified by a number of amendments, was adopted with 54 votes in favour and 11 against.

c) EU Space Industrial Policy, releasing the Potential for Growth in the Space Sector

AFET/7/12757, 2013/2092(INI) COM(2013)0108

Rapporteur for the opinion: Tarja Cronberg (Verts/ALE, FI)

The opinion, as modified by a number of amendments, was adopted with 52 votes in favour, 6 against and 5 abstentions.

VII. Next meeting(s)

- 30 September 2013, 15.00 – 18.30 (Brussels)
- 10 October 2013, 9.00 – 10.30 (Strasbourg)
- 16 October 2013, 12.30 – 14.00 (Brussels)
- 17 October 2013, 9.00 – 12.30 (Brussels)