

Newsletter of the EPP-CD Parliamentary Group in the Council of Europe



A very special guest was welcomed by the EPP/CD Parliamentary Group in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe at the beginning of the session week. Pedro Agramunt, EPP President, The President of the European People's Party Joseph Daul came to discuss with parliamentarians on current topics. The picture shows, in the first row from the left, the President of the Parliamentary Council of Europe (PACE) Axel Fischer together with the group.

Facing Terrorism

Europe is suffering increasingly under terrorism. Combined with "closed" communities, improved armed clashes in and around Europe and migration there is the threat of an explosive mixture to arise which could seriously jeopardized the security of people in Europe. An intensive cooperation between security authorities with improved information exchange seems essential in this context. Integration of efforts in education and an information campaign for the wide public as well as effective measures to avoid further radicalization of conflicts for example by insulting criticisms or hate speech could help to relax the security situation.



Dear Reader,

after 100 days EPP Group Presidency tighter work structures and more intensive cooperation with members of other groups have borne first fruits: group colleague Emanuel Zingeris from Lithuania was elected by a large majority to be the rapporteur for the Council of Europe report on internal security after the terrorist attacks of Brussels. The President of the European Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, said when visiting Strasbourg, that he considers the relationship between the European Union and the Council of Europe to be particularly positive. Both are children of the same ideas, ambitions and the same European spirit. They mobilized and transported successfully the energy and the commitment of the founding fathers of Europe. Europe closing ranks with the peoples of the world is - as a project of national cooperation and international development cooperation - a model for all.

Armed conflict in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and in the Eastern Ukraine goes on destabilizing further Eastern Europe. The name of Nadiya Savchenko - detained in Russia - stands as an example for the insurmountable difficulties in the various efforts of the Council of Europe to achieve sustainable peace in armed conflicts.

Axel Fischer, MdB

Chairman of EPP/CD Parliamentary Group in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe



Refugee-crisis requires European response

The refugee crisis is a task that can only be solved by Europe as a whole, stressed the PACE President Pedro Agramunt (EPP/CD).

"The challenges we are facing affect all 47 members of our Organisation. No country alone can cope with them. We need more European solidarity and a multilateral approach to uphold the standards and international commitments we have subscribed to," said the President.

Agramunt pointed out - after he spent two days on site in Hungary - that this country was confronted with an unprecedented challenge of around 400,000 asylum seekers, refugees and migrants, all passing through Hungarian territory within a very short time. With regard to the refugee crisis, Agramunt said:

"We must examine the cases of all individuals arriving in Europe in accordance with international standards, so as to ensure that every person in need of international protec-



tion receives it. This is our international obligation. I encourage ... the authorities of all member states to seek the advice and expertise of the Council of Europe, in particular by closely co-operating with the Secre-

tary General's Special Representative on Migration and Refugees, so as to find appropriate solutions which respect human rights standards and are adapted to the local situation."

Upcoming elections

What: Early Parl. Elections

Where: Serbia

When: 24 April 2016



What: Parl. Elections

Where: Cyprus

When: 22 May 2016



What: Early Parl. Elections

Where: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

When: 5 June 2016



What: Parl. Elections

Where: Russian Federation

When: 18. September 2016



What: Parl. Elections

Where: Georgia

When: 8 October 2016



From the Committees

Discussions about the draft report by Petra de Sutter (Belgium, SOC) on the subject of surrogacy were held by the Committee on Social, Health and Sustainable Development at its meeting in Paris in March.

The committee rejected a tentative resolution and recommendation on the draft report with a narrow margin. A consultation scheduled by chairperson Stella Kyriakides (Cyprus, EPP/CD) during this session week provided no final decision. At the next meeting of the Committee consider whether de Sutter shall create a new report.



Rapporteurs out & about

Von Axel E. Fischer

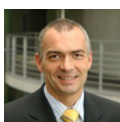
Kazakhstan is our reliable business partners and regional anchor of stability in Asia. Through Democratisation the country has moved much closer to Europe. We want to further develop the many fruitful relations between Europe and Kazakhstan, on-site together with parliamentarians and representatives of civil society. My report shall provide a sound basis for the further integration of Kazakhstan into the European community of values.



MdB Axel Fischer held talks in Kazakhstan.

Our rapporteurs

Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy



"The relations of the Council of Europe with Kazakhstan"

Rapporteur: Axel E. Fischer



"Situation in Lebanon and challenges for regional stability and European security"

Rapporteur: Tobias Zech



"Libya's future between threats of terrorism and a democratic prospect"

Rapporteur: Attila Korodi

Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media



"Intellectual property rights in the digital era"

Rapporteur: Axel E. Fischer



"Sport for all: a bridge to equality, integration and social inclusion"

Rapporteur: Carmen Quintanilla



"Towards a framework of competences for democratic citizenship"

Rapporteur: Jacques Legendre



"Promoting Regional or Minority Languages in Central and Eastern Europe"

Rapporteur: Rózsa Hoffmann



"Attacks against journalists and media freedom in Europe"

Rapporteur: Volodymyr Arieu

Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights



"Abusive use of the Interpol system: the need for more stringent legal safeguards"

"Strengthening the rule of law in South-East European countries through targeted reform of the legal system"

Rapporteur: Bernd Fabritius



"Human rights compatibility of investor-State arbitration in international investment protection agreements"

Rapporteur: Pieter Omtzigt

Ausschuss für Gleichstellung und Nichtdiskriminierung



"Female genital mutilation in Europe"

Rapporteur: Béatrice Fresko-Rolfo



"Promoting the inclusion of Roma and Travellers"

Rapporteur: Tobias Zech



"Assessing the impact of measures to improve women's political representation"

Rapporteur: Elena Centemero



"The protection of the rights of parents and children belonging to religious minorities"

Rapporteur: Valeriu Ghiletschi

Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs



"Parliamentary immunity: challenges to the scope of the privileges and immunities enjoyed by members of the Parliamentary Assembly"

Rapporteur: Liliana Palihovići

Our rapporteurs

Monitoring Committee



"The honouring of obligations and commitments by Albania"

Rapporteur: Cezar Florin Preda

"The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (September 2015 – December 2016)"

Corapporteur: Cezar Florin Preda



"The honouring of obligations and commitments by Armenia"

Corapporteur: Giuseppe Galati



"The honouring of obligations and commitments by Bosnia and Herzegovina"

Corapporteur: Egidijus Vareikis



"Post-monitoring dialogue with Bulgaria"

Corapporteur: Zsolt Németh



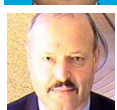
"The honouring of obligations and commitments by the Russian Federation"

Corapporteur: Theodora Bakoyannis



"Post-monitoring dialogue with Montenegro"

Corapporteur: Ionuț-Marian Stroe



"Post-monitoring dialogue with "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

Corapporteur: Valeriu Ghilechi



"The honouring of obligations and commitments by Ukraine"

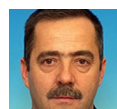
Corapporteur: Axel E. Fischer

Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons



"The impact of European populations dynamics on migration policies"

Rapporteur: Kristin Ørmen Johnsen



"Possible ways to improve the emergency refugee situations funding"

Rapporteur: Cezar Florin Preda

Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development



"The employment rights of female workers from Eastern Europe"

Rapporteur: Viorel Riceard Badea



"The over-sexualisation of children"

Rapporteur: Valeriu Ghilechi



"Ensuring access to healthcare for all children in Europe"

Rapporteur: Stella Kyriakides



"Road safety in Europe as a public health priority"

Rapporteur: Naira Karapetyan



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#PACEspring2016

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<https://www.youtube.com/user/eppcdgroup>

Legal notice

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