



EUROPEAN UNION
Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe

Weekly Media Report of developments related to the Council of Europe

14 –18 September 2015

Migration

[EU Approves Military Action Against Mediterranean Smuggler Boats: Report](#)

14/09 - Newsweek

The European Union's war on people smugglers operating out of Libya is entering its second phase, meaning that boats used by smugglers can be targeted and destroyed in international waters, after a meeting of the European Council. AFP reports that unnamed European sources confirmed that EU member states agreed to back military action against vessels used by smugglers on the Mediterranean, ahead of an emergency meeting of EU interior ministers in Brussels on Monday to discuss the refugee crisis.

[Threats wrong way to get EU deal on migrant quotas: Merkel](#)

15/09 – AFP/ France 24

German Chancellor Angela Merkel said Tuesday that using threats would not get EU states on one page over the distribution of migrants with the bloc. "Threats are not the right way to unity," she told reporters. Earlier Tuesday, Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere had said that the bloc should examine cutting EU funds to member states that refuse to accept their fair share of refugees.

[Germany and Austria call for EU summit on refugee crisis](#)

15/09 – DW/Germany

The leaders of Germany and Austria have called for a unified European response to the refugee crisis. Angela Merkel said the summit need not be about a quota system for redistributing asylum seekers. At a joint press conference on Tuesday, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her Austrian counterpart Werner Faymann called for a European Union summit next week to address the refugee crisis. Their two nations and Sweden cannot handle the unprecedented influx on their own, the pair said in Berlin.



Council of Europe asks Hungary to explain new migration legislation

16/09 – Reuters

The head of human rights body Council of Europe said on Wednesday he had asked Hungary to explain legislation it adopted last week to deal with the migration crisis. Hungary on Tuesday shut its border with Serbia to close off an unprecedented inflow of migrants after passing legislation which among other things allow it to declare a "state of crisis due to mass immigration".

Turkey

EU human rights body urges Turkey to allow access to Cizre

12/09 – The Guardian

Council of Europe wants independent observers to be allowed 'to dispel rumours of human rights violations' in mainly Kurdish town. Europe's top human rights body has called on Turkey to allow independent observers into a mainly Kurdish town where a 24-hour curfew has been imposed since 4 September as security forces battle suspected militants. Nils Muižnieks, human rights commissioner for the Council of Europe, expressed concern over claims of "disproportionate use of force" against civilians in Cizre, near the Syrian border. Turkey's interior minister, Selami Altınok, said seven suspected Kurdish rebels and one civilian have died in clashes in Cizre. A pro-Kurdish opposition party said 21 civilians have died.

Editor's note: There is a mistake in the headline: the Guardian refers to the Council of Europe as a body of the European Union

Armenia

Council of Europe Body Backs Armenian Constitutional Reform

14/09 – Asbarez/Armenia

In a major boost to President Serzh Sarkisian, legal experts from the Council of Europe have endorsed the latest version of his administration's draft constitutional amendments, saying that they are now "in line with international standards." In a weekend report, the Venice Commission argued that the constitutional reform package drafted by an Armenian presidential body has undergone important changes recommended by its representatives.



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Azerbaijan

[Anne Brasseur, Martin Schulz and Johannes Hahn conduct discussions on Azerbaijan](#)

17/09 - Newa.az-APA/Azerbaijan

Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament (EP) as well as Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, have conducted discussions on Azerbaijan. The meeting took place on Sept. 16. Political leaders from the two parliaments attended the meeting as well.

Belarus

[Hope for Belarus' membership in Council of Europe](#)

15/09 – BelTA/Belarus

The Council of Europe expresses hope that Belarus will be able to become its member in the future, Director and Legal Adviser at the Directorate of Legal Advice and Public International Law of the Council of Europe Jorg Polakiewicz said at the expert conference on legal standards and the Council of Europe's conventions in Minsk on 15 September.

PACE

[House speaker meets rapporteur for Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe](#)

14/09 – Petra/ Jordan news

Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Atef Tarawneh said the House will open dialogue with all spectra of the Jordanian society including political parties, associations and civil society institutions on the elections law. At a meeting with rapporteur for Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Josette Durrieu, and the accompanying parliamentary delegation, Tarawneh reviewed reforms being implemented by Jordan in the political, economic and social fields despite the situation in the region.