



## **Weekly Media Report of developments related to the Council of Europe** 5 - 9 October 2015

The Weekly Media Report gives an overview of recent developments in international media. Please note that the Report does not constitute a formal communication, does not represent the official position of the Delegation and does not commit the European Union in any way.

Ce rapport donne un aperçu des développements récents dans les médias internationaux. Ce rapport n'est pas une communication formelle, ne représente pas la position officielle de la Délégation et n'engage en aucun cas l'Union Européenne.

### **Azerbaijan**

#### **[Council of Europe withdraws from human rights task force in Azerbaijan](#)**

*07/10 – AFP/Expatica France*

Europe's top human rights watchdog said Wednesday it is withdrawing from a task force with Azerbaijan as the rights situation in the country has "deteriorated dramatically". "Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland informed the Committee of Ministers today of his decision to end the organisation's participation in the joint working group on human rights issues in Azerbaijan," the pan-European Council of Europe said in a statement. The working group is made up of government officials, members of parliament and human rights activists.

### **Belarus**

#### **[Belarusian demonstrators protest Russian air base](#)**

*05/10 – DW*

Protesters took to the streets of the Belarusian capital, Minsk, on Sunday to voice their opposition to a planned Russian military air base. But some believe the former Soviet state has little choice. Around 1,000 opposition activists marched through Minsk on Sunday, chanting "No foreign military bases!" and waving placards reading "We want a peaceful sky." They say the Russian base would make it impossible for Belarus to maintain neutrality between the West and Moscow, and add to regional tensions over the conflict in Ukraine.



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## ECHR

### [Strasbourg court begins tweeting case-law](#)

*05/10 - Scottish Legal News*

The European Court of Human Rights has today launched a multilingual Twitter account ECHRPublication reserved for news on case-law publications, translations and the HUDOC case-law database. Registrar Erik Fribergh said: "Over recent years the Court has stepped up its efforts to improve the understanding of the Court's case-law especially in States where neither English nor French is well understood. "With this account, and by addressing them in their own language, the Registry wishes to further assist legal professionals, public officials and NGOs in keeping abreast of developments in this area."

### [UK prisoner voting may be affected by European court ruling](#)

*06/10 - BBC*

UK prisoners could challenge the blanket ban on them voting in European elections after a European Court of Justice ruling on a case in France. Convicted murderer Thierry Delvigne claimed a ban on him voting in European Parliament elections violated his civil and political rights. But the court ruled the ban was "proportionate" to the offence. The decision means some UK prisoners could make a challenge if a ban would not be proportionate in their case.

## Migration

### [Turkey's Erdogan to hold migration talks with EU](#)

*05/10 - BBC*

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is to hold key talks with EU officials in Brussels on how to deal with the migrant crisis. Turkey is home to at least two million Syrian refugees and has been one of the main departure points for those trying to reach Europe. It is thought EU officials will offer financial aid for more camps in Turkey. Mr Erdogan is expected to press for more EU involvement to end the war in Syria. EU leaders hope Syrian asylum seekers will stay in Turkey if camps there are better and if they have access to healthcare and jobs, correspondents report.

### [Germany faces 1.5 million asylum claims this year – report](#)

*05/10 - BBC*

The number of people seeking asylum in Germany this year will be as high as 1.5 million - almost double the previous estimate, German media report. The German government has not confirmed the new estimate, which comes from an internal official report cited by popular daily Bild. The report warns that services helping refugees will not be able to cope.



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### [Merkel, Hollande call for 'more Europe' in dealing with refugees](#)

07/10 - DW

In speeches brimming with references to how Europe has overcome challenges, Francois Hollande and Angela Merkel appealed for cooperation in facing the migration crisis. The EU cannot afford to wall itself off, they said. French President Francois Hollande and German Chancellor Angela Merkel on Wednesday appealed to EU parliamentarians for the need to work together to deal with the hundreds of thousands of desperate people fleeing war and poverty in search of safety and opportunity in Europe.

### [EU to speed up deportations to tackle migrant crisis](#)

09/10 – AFP/The Express Tribune

European Union nations agreed on Thursday to speed up the deportation of failed asylum seekers as they took a harder line toward tackling the bloc's worst migration crisis since World War II. Interior ministers endorsed a dedicated programme to send back those they described as economic migrants — who are largely from poor African nations — and not refugees from conflict zones. After months of tensions over the more than 600,000 people who have flooded into Europe this year, Brussels is now taking a tougher stance by focusing on tightening border controls and reducing the incentive for people to come to the continent.

### [First asylum seekers leave Italy under EU relocation plan](#)

09/10 – AFP/The Express Tribune

A small group of Eritreans left Italy for Sweden on Friday, the first contingent of asylum-seekers to be relocated under a European Union scheme to ease the burden of the migration crisis on frontline countries. Grinning shyly before the media, 19 young Eritreans — five women and 14 men — waved and blew kisses as they boarded a small propeller plane at Rome's Ciampino airport after hugging members of the Red Cross and UN Refugee agency goodbye.

## **Ukraine**

### [Putin promised to ask Ukraine rebels to cancel vote: Poroshenko](#)

04/10 – Reuters

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said on Sunday Russia's Vladimir Putin had promised to ask pro-Russian separatists to cancel elections planned in rebel-held territory in defiance of Kiev. Under terms of a peace agreement signed in Minsk in February, local elections were meant to be held in the separatist regions along with the rest of the former Soviet republic this autumn. But Kiev has since said they cannot take place in the east because of continued security problems there. The separatists, in response, scheduled their own ballot for October and November, angering Kiev which said it would not recognize the results.



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### [Ukraine crisis: OSCE encouraged as rivals confirm pullback](#)

05/10 – BBC

The opposing sides in eastern Ukraine - government troops and pro-Russian separatists - are both withdrawing tanks and other weapons from the front line, Ukraine's military command says. The pullback is part of the ceasefire accord signed in Minsk in February. A spokesman for international monitors in the area, Michael Bociurkiw of the OSCE, said there was "encouraging" movement of heavy weapons, but storage sites would still have to be verified.

### [EU welcomes Ukraine rebel poll delay as 'fundamental step'](#)

06/10 – AFP/Global Post

The EU welcomed Tuesday a decision by pro-Russian Ukraine rebels to delay planned elections until 2016 as a "fundamental step" towards full implementation of the Minsk peace accords. "Due implementation (of the decision) will represent a fundamental step towards full implementation of the Minsk agreements," the European Union's foreign affairs arm said in a statement. The European Union, which has solidly backed Kiev, said the rebel decision would allow proper preparations to be made for future local elections in the rebel-controlled areas.

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