



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

Weekly Media Report of developments related to the Council of Europe **26 - 30 October 2015**

The Weekly Media Report gives an overview of recent news 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 de nouvelles récentes 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.

Belarus

[EU and US to ease sanctions on Belarus President Lukashenko](#)

30/10 – BBC/UK

The EU is to suspend most of its sanctions against Belarus including an asset freeze and travel ban on President Alexander Lukashenko. The decision follows the freeing of the country's remaining six political prisoners in August. The US has also said it will ease sanctions, but urged Belarus "to improve its record with respect to human rights and democracy". Mr Lukashenko is believed to want closer ties with Western countries. He is reported to be eager to reduce Russia's leverage as he comes under pressure from Moscow to allow a Russian air base in his country. Russia wants to establish the base to counter what it sees as Nato's eastward advance, but Belarus argues that such a base will not reduce military and political tensions in the region.



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Turkey

[Turkish Police Seize Two TV Stations of Government Critics](#)

28/10 - The Wall Street Journal / International

Move against news organizations that criticize president and ruling party comes before Sunday's elections. Turkish authorities seized control of two television stations that have been critical of the government before an election Sunday, as officials expanded a probe of what they allege is a coup plot against President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The police arrived about 4 a.m. Wednesday at KanalTurk and Bugun TV television stations' shared building in Istanbul, breaking chains mounted at the main entrance and using tear gas to disperse protesters who had gathered overnight after news of an impending raid.

Azerbaijan

[Azeri leader Aliyev to affirm rule in poll, critics say vote unfair](#)

29/10 – Reuters / International

Azeri President Ilham Aliyev, helped by an oil-fueled economic boom, will maintain his tight hold on power with victory this weekend for his political party in polls opponents are boycotting and international rights groups say will not be fair. But Western governments balance their criticism over human rights with strategic considerations, courting Azerbaijan as an alternative to Russia in supplying oil and gas to Europe. Azerbaijan is host to oil majors including BP, ExxonMobil and Chevron. Ilham Aliyev has consolidated power since succeeding his father and long-serving leader Heydar in 2003, overseeing a period when revenue from rising oil and gas exports has, officials say, brought better living standards for all.

GRECO

[Report: Athens slammed over political corruption](#)

26/10 - EurActiv.gr / International

Political corruption has played a key role in Greece's economic crisis. But national governments still refuse to take determined measures to tackle it. A new report focusing on parliament, judges and prosecutors by the Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), calls on Greece to enact rules that will make political and juridical procedures more transparent. The report emphasizes that although corruption is one of the fundamental problems that caused the Greek economic crisis, successive governments have taken minimal steps to tackle it, especially amongst lawmakers.



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ECHR

[Man's 'human rights breached' over PSNI 'surveillance' of lawyer conversations](#)

27/10 - BBC / UK

A man from Northern Ireland has won a landmark case in the European Court of Human Rights. The claimant, known only as RE after being granted anonymity by the court, alleged that the PSNI breached his right to privacy by listening to conversations he had with his lawyer. RE was arrested three times over the murder of a police officer between March 2009 and May 2010. Dissident republicans were blamed for the killing. During the first two detentions, his solicitor received assurances from the PSNI that his conversations with RE would not be subject to covert surveillance. During the third arrest, the PSNI refused to grant the same assurances.

Migration

[Germany to Send Border Guards to Slovenia to Help With Refugees](#)

27/10 – Newsweek / International

Germany are to send border guards to Slovenia to assist authorities who are struggling to cope with the large numbers of refugees arriving in the country. German newspaper Mitteldeutsche Zeitung cited a spokesman for Germany's Interior Ministry, who told the paper on Tuesday, "It's clear that we will be involved." The guards will form part of a deployment of 400 police officers from EU member states that are being sent to the Slovenia within the week, after EU leaders reached an agreement for a 17-point plan to bolster support for the Balkan states at a summit held in Brussels on Sunday. It is unclear how many German police will be involved in the operation.

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