

## THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE AND THE ELECTIONS IN RUSSIA

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The Council of Europe has issued a Press Communiqué asserting that the elections in Russia last Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> have been well administered but some concerns about the democratic context remain at stake, in particular, a “meaningful debate and pluralism“ due to the treatment of the elections by the State-controlled media. These conclusions were developed by the International Election Observation Mission.

### *New Resolutions of the Commission on the Status of Women*

The Commission on the Status of Women concluded on March 12<sup>th</sup> its forty-eighth session with the adoption of conclusions on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality for women . Moreover, it adopted conclusions on the women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building. Finally, the Commission requested the Economic and Social Council to endorse these conclusions.

### *Green light for referendum in Venezuela*

The electoral chamber of the Supreme Tribunal of Venezuela ordered the electoral authorities that they should withdraw the objections to 800.000 signatures under analysis because they character was under doubt. The referendum tries to finish the mandate of president Chavez.

## THE NEWS FROM INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

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### EDITORIAL

#### ***Terrorism and War have both the same victims: civilians***

The notion of crimes against humanity protects civilians from very serious human rights violations that are widespread or systematic and that are committed against civilian population. This notion is based upon concrete treaty law (for instance, the Statute of the International Criminal Court) and to some extent it has acquired the character of international customary law. Armed conflicts have been recently surrounded by accusations of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed against civilian population of the countries attacked. Moreover, the recent dramatic events in Madrid reveal that civilians were targeted, though the acts had supposedly relation with the alignment of Spain in the Iraq war.

We consider that the international community should address with seriousness the problem of terrorism. Irrelevant discussions about “definitions” are always at stake. We understand that more than definitions, the causes of terrorism should be deeply discussed. One of the relevant elements is the performance of the powers during the recent armed conflicts. The self-critique should not be absent in any debate.



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# INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

## Iran finally permits IAEA inspections

After an initial refusal to the entrance of IAEA inspectors, Iran has finally decided to allow the visit this month. The inspectors will arrive 27 March.

## New Expert on Anti-Terror Measures?

Mexico has proposed the UN Commission on Human Rights the appointment of a Special Rapporteur that will analyze the anti-terror measures adopted by States and their compatibility with international human rights standards.

## African States question the IMF

African countries, often target of the IMF policies, have met in Sandton last week, calling for transparency as to select a new IMF highest authority replacing Horst Köhler, who resigned in March, because he has been nominated presidential candidate in Germany.

## Spain would withdraw from Iraq

The elected PM of Spain, Mr. Rodriguez Zapatero, has announced that he will withdraw the Spanish troops from Iraq at latest the 30 June . Apparently, only a mandate from the UN Security

Council could cause the Spanish troops to remain in Iraq.

## 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on human rights

On 15 March the 60<sup>th</sup> Session the UN Commission on Human Rights has started. As every year, the Commission will meet for six weeks. This year the emphasis falls on the strengthening of the international system of protection, complementing the treaty law system.

## Meeting in Vienna calls for more cooperation on terrorism issues

*A joint meeting of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) adopted the Vienna Declaration, reaffirming the central role of the United Nations Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) in the global effort to combat terrorism. The Declaration acknowledges the need of assistance to UN Member States as to implement the Security Council Resolution 1373 (2001) and the existent 12 anti-terrorism conventions.*

## GHANAIANS EVACUATED IN EQUATORIAL GUINEA

The mistreatment to foreigners in Equatorial Guinea causes the flew of persons of Ghanaian origin from this country. State Security forces allegedly assault cities, provoking the escape of foreigners. The State would have arrested some of these security forces members, that would be organizing a plot in the country.

## Japan cancels debt of Ghana

Japan has decided to cancel a 60 million dollars debt of Ghana as to set free the country for development problems. The cancellation will save \$3 million a year in repayments over the next 20 years.

## ARGENTINA AND BRAZIL, FOR A COMMON STRATEGY WITH THE IMF

The presidents of Argentina and Brazil are meeting in the last country as to agree on a common strategy of negotiation concerning the international financial institutions.

**Aristide, in Jamaica.** The former president of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide has arrived to Jamaica after a brief stage in the Central African Republic. Aristide claims that he has not resigned, but that he was victim of a coup-d'état.

**China** has amended the Constitution including protection to the right to individual property , as well as some formal guarantees to human rights.

## US PLANS HUNT IN AFGHANISTAN

US officers have announced new operations in Afghanistan, as to destroy terrorist infrastructure in the country.

**CALIFORNIA COURT HALTS GAY MARRIAGES:** The Supreme Court of California has stopped via an interim measure gay marriages in San Francisco, until several pending cases are decided.