

Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) working group on EU internal human rights policy

NGO joint call to members of the European Parliament ahead of the vote on the report on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union (2013-2014) [Ferrara report]

Brussels, 3 September 2015

Dear Member of the European Parliament,

Next week, you will debate and vote in plenary on the report on the situation of fundamental rights in the European Union (2013-2014) [Ferrara report] that was adopted by the LIBE committee last July.

Our organisations, representing over 80 NGOs working in the field of human rights and social justice, call on you to express your full support to the Ferrara report and secure its adoption, without any amendment curtailing its scope or watering down its substance.

The report adopted in LIBE provides a fair and broad picture of the human rights challenges that Europe is facing. Confronted with these challenges, and with a view to effectively address them, the report articulates a clear ask on the Commission to develop an internal fundamental rights strategy, in cooperation with the other institutions and in consultation with civil society (paragraphs 4 and 10). This overarching call encompasses and complements constructive recommendations relating to the use of existing fundamental rights and rule of law instruments (para. 8, 9, 11 and 12).

Such leadership and recommendations from the European Parliament are extremely useful contributions to the ongoing institutional debates, at a time where political will, together with strategic thinking and effective action, are needed more than ever to ensure that the EU delivers on its promise to enforce respect for human rights and the rule of law at home, as well as abroad.

The calls are consistent with, and reinforce previous calls made by the European Parliament, with the support of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA), the Council of Europe and civil society.

We count on you to follow the steps of the LIBE Committee and endorse the Ferrara report. A strong and united parliamentary position is essential to sustain effective institutional models that can deliver on human rights at EU level.

The European Parliament must continue to hold EU institutions and member states to account for their record on human rights. It must stand firm on its positions and remain a driving force for concerted and proactive EU action on human rights and the rule of law. Our organisations stand ready to assist with this task and will continue to push together for the development of an EU internal human rights strategy to guide this work.

Yours sincerely,

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) working group on EU internal human rights policy,

Amnesty International
Association pour la Prévention de la Torture (APT)
CBM
Church and Society Commission of the CEC
Coalition for the ICC (CICC)
European Network Against Racism (ENAR)
Fédération Internationale de l'Action des Chrétiens pour l'Abolition de la Torture (FIACAT)
FIDH (International Federation for Human Rights)
Human Rights Watch (HRW)
ILGA-Europe - the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex
Association (ILGA)
International Commission of Jurists (ICJ)
International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)
Open Society European Policy Institute (OSEPI)
Quaker Council for European Affairs (QCEA)
Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF)
Save the Children
Social Platform
World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)

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Note: This message was sent by E-mail from OSEPI on 3rd September 2015.