

66/2017 : 21 June 2017 – Judgment of the Court of Justice in Case C-621/15

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The High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, has today announced the appointment of Mr Roland Kobia as the Special Envoy of the European Union to Afghanistan. The Special Envoy's main task will be to advance the European Union's contribution to delivering lasting peace and prosperity in Afghanistan and in the region.

Mr Roland Kobia, a senior EEAS official and currently Head of the European Union Delegation to Myanmar, will ensure the European Union's continued engagement in international and regional processes aiming at peace in Afghanistan by coordinating and consulting with all regional, international and non-governmental actors. He will act as the European Union's representative in relevant fora and processes. He will also ensure regular reporting to the Member States of the European Union.

"Roland Kobia has a long-standing experience of peace and reconciliation processes in Asia and Africa. With his appointment, the European Union confirms its commitment to cooperate with our Afghan friends to bring peace to the country once and for all, after a long conflict which has cost so many lives, as well as to support the stability and the development of the country, the rule of law, and human and women's rights", Ms Mogherini said. "I would also like to thank the current EU Special Representative, Franz-Michael Mellbin, for his outstanding contribution and tireless work in support of stability, peace and reform efforts in Afghanistan over the past four years", she added.

The new Special Envoy will work in close cooperation with the recently nominated Head of the European Union Delegation in Afghanistan, Mr Pierre Mayaudon. Mr Kobia will take up his new role on 1 September 2017.

EU-Republic of Moldova Human Rights Dialogue

Chisinau, 20 June 2017

On 20 June 2017, the European Union and the Republic of Moldova held the eighth round of their Human Rights Dialogue in Chisinau.

In line with its policy of consulting civil society ahead of meetings on human rights, the European Union met representatives of Moldovan and international Civil Society Organisations prior to the Dialogue. Civil Society representatives were also invited to the Dialogue and attended as observers.

The Dialogue was held in an open and constructive atmosphere. The Moldovan Government has an ongoing commitment to improving the human rights situation in the country and achieving sustainable progress in this area. Following up on developments since the last Dialogue in June 2016, discussions covered a wide range of issues: freedom of expression, pluralism of the media and reforms in the audio-visual domain; the electoral legislation; the protection of vulnerable groups, including the rights of persons belonging to national minorities; the rights of the child; and the fight against impunity, ill-treatment and human rights protection in the justice system.

The creation of a National Preventive Mechanism against Torture and Moldova's signature of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence were appreciated by the European Union. A Human Rights Strategy and Action Plan, taking into account the recommendations of the United Nations Universal Periodic Review in this process, should now be adopted. The European Union recalled the importance of providing the necessary resources to the Office of the Ombudsman on Human Rights (Advocate of the People) and the Equality Council (the national anti-discrimination institution) for them to be able to fulfill their mission. The EU also underlined the need to align Moldova's legislation on freedom of the media with European standards, to finalise the work on the new Audiovisual Code and to continue combating all forms of discrimination on any ground.

The Dialogue also offered the opportunity to touch upon a key topic in the current EU-Moldova political dialogue: the proposed reform of the electoral system. In this respect, the European Union reiterated its expectation that the authorities of the Republic of Moldova would study the Opinion issued by the Venice Commission and the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights on a draft revision of the electoral legislation of the Republic of Moldova, and follow its recommendations.

The Moldovan delegation was led by Mr Vladimir Cebotari, Minister of Justice and by Mr Nicolae Eșanu, Deputy Minister of Justice. The EU delegation was led by Mr Adriano Martins, Deputy Head of Division for bilateral relations with the Eastern Partnership countries in the European External Action Service.

The next Human Rights Dialogue between the European Union and Moldova is scheduled to take place in Brussels in 2018.

European Ceremony of Honour for Dr. Helmut Kohl on 1 July 2017

To honour the legacy of Dr. Helmut Kohl, Honorary Citizen of Europe, the three European institutions are co-organising a European Ceremony of Honour on 1 July in the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

This will be followed by a ceremonial event in the cathedral in Speyer (Germany).

Further information will follow soon.

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