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## What's coming up this week

### **Greens/EFA priorities - plenary session 16-19 December 2019**

#### **Rule of Law in Malta, following recent revelations around the murder of Daphne Caruana Galizia**

*Debate with resolution Tuesday, vote Thursday*

After revelations in the investigation of the murder of Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia, at the request of the Greens/EFA, the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament agreed to send an urgent mission to Malta last week. This follows the resignation of Prime Minister Joseph Muscat and his closest allies, amidst severe allegations of corruption at the highest levels. Following the mission to Malta, The Parliament will now debate the situation in Malta, on Tuesday, with a vote to follow on Thursday.

#### **Conflict of interest and corruption affecting EU's financial interests**

*Debate Tuesday*

According to leaks in the Czech media, the European Commission's audit into EU payments for non-agricultural funds to the Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš's Agrofert group of companies has found he is in conflict of interest. The leaked audit, which is the first to come out, finds that around €11 million of non-agricultural EU funds will need to be returned. A second audit looking into the potential conflicts of interest around EU agricultural subsidies and Agrofert is expected next year. The Greens/EFA group have pushed for a debate on the situation around conflicts of interest and EU funds.

#### **Situation of the Uyghur in China and Sakharov prize award ceremony**

*Debate with resolution on Wednesday and vote on Thursday; Sakharov award Wednesday*

On Wednesday, the Parliament will debate the plight of the Uyghur in China, with a statement from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy. Our group successfully added a resolution to the debate, to be voted on Thursday.

Ilham Tohti, a Uyghur economist fighting for the rights of China's Uyghur minority, will receive the

Sakharov prize on Wednesday. In 2014, he was sentenced to life imprisonment. Despite this, he remains a voice of reconciliation, an advocate of the implementation of regional autonomy laws in China.

## **EU pollinators initiative to protect bees and other vital insects**

*Council and Commission statements, debate with resolution on Tuesday, vote Thursday*

Insect species are declining at an alarming speed. Without the around 11,400 species of insect pollinators whole ecosystems would collapse. The EU needs to take the impact of pesticides seriously and properly implement its laws on pesticide use. The Greens/EFA group want concrete and binding targets for the reduction of pesticide use in farming.

## **Animal welfare during transport**

*Council and Commission statements and debate on Tuesday*

The Greens/EFA group strongly supported calls for this debate on animal welfare in transport. It follows an incident on 24 November, where a ship containing 14,600 sheep overturned in a Romanian harbour, drowning all but 234 of the animals. MEPs in this new mandate are for the second time calling for an inquiry committee to be set up. The Greens/EFA group are asking for a ban on animal transport over 8 hours, and an end to live animal exports.

## **EU-Mercosur and the European Green deal**

*Topical debate on Wednesday, 15:00*

At the request of the Greens/EFA group, the plenary will debate the compatibility of the EU-Mercosur free trade agreement with the European Green Deal. There are multiple injustices hidden in the EU-Mercosur trade agreement in terms of the protection of human and social rights, food safety and significantly, environmental destruction in Latin America. Such concerns urgently need addressing at a time when Europe is preparing to step up its green and social ambition.

## **Election of the EU Ombudsperson**

*First ballot Tuesday, possible second and third ballots and election Wednesday*

Next week, the EU Parliament will elect its Ombudsperson for 2019-2024. The Greens/EFA group supports the candidacy of Emily O'Reilly in continuing her work as EU Ombudsperson. For our group, O'Reilly is best suited for the role as an independent candidate and given her strong track record in holding the EU institutions to account. The highest standards of transparency, ethics and integrity must be upheld by the work of the Ombudsperson's office.

## **ECJ ruling on Greens/EFA MEP Oriol Junqueras**

*Ruling Thursday*

On Thursday the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg will rule on whether our colleague **Oriol**

**Junqueras** can take up his seat as a Member of the European Parliament, despite the Spanish Supreme Court not permitting him after he was elected in the last European elections in May. According to the Advocate General's opinion in November, an MEP's mandate is acquired solely from the electorate and cannot be conditional on the completion of any subsequent formality.

## **OECD digital tax resolution**

*Oral questions and debate Monday, vote Wednesday*

Negotiations are ongoing with the goal of reaching an OECD digital taxation agreement by the end of 2020. The ECON committee in the EU Parliament has adopted a motion for resolution to contribute to the debate about which countries have a right to tax and at which rate. The Greens/EFA calls for a departure from traditional arm's length methods to determine where companies pay taxes and for a minimum effective tax rate of 20% in the EU. Our group calls for negotiations to reach an agreement in 2020 or for the Commission to present a legislative proposal as soon as possible, if no international agreement can be reached.

## **More:**

- Final trilogue on the drinking water directive expected on Wednesday. *An over-the-phone press conference with Greens/EFA MEP Sven Giegold will take place on Thursday. Please contact Pia Kohorst if you wish to register.*

## **Presidential press briefing**

*Tuesday 10.30*

Our regular press briefing with Presidents Ska Keller and Philippe Lamberts will take place on Tuesday at 10.30 in the Daphne Caruana Galizia press room, in Strasbourg.

## **Recommended**

Press release

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