

## WEEKLY UPDATE

25 April - 4 May 2016

Weeks 18 & 19

### General

Neil and Natacha will attend the OSJI-OSIFE coordination meeting in Barcelona to engage on strategy direction. The purpose of the meeting: “gain a better understanding of resources available in the network and devise effective forms of collaboration”. The rest of us will be enjoying our time off on 5 and 6 May!

The short week is also the reason for this unique “double” edition of our weekly update.

### Highlights

Congrats to Villy, who is invited to speak about anti-Gypsyism at the launch event of the EU High level group on combating racism, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance on 14 June 2016!

The EP Resolution on International Humanitarian Law was adopted! A crushing majority (500/93/29) adopted a paragraph on drones: “Reiterates its grave concern over the use of armed drones outside the international legal framework, and insists on its call on the Council to adopt an EU common position on the use of armed drones.” Srdjan has analysed the voting pattern.

### Updates (25 April - 4 May)

#### • Internal Policy

2 May: Neil hosted a brainstorm session on extremist politics to discuss ways to counter the insidious and polemic racist rhetoric of extremists. The initiative was led by former OSF colleague Alan Deletroz.

2 May: Together with Digital Leaders and Democratic Society, Anca and Neil organised the “DLEU Salon - Open Policy Making in the Era of Digital Democracy” to engage in a discussion on new ways of opening up the policy making processes at EU level. Speakers included Neil, Robert Madelin (European Commission) and Anthony Zacharzewski (Democratic Society). The Democratic Society report is available [here](#).

#### • External Policy

25-27 April: Marta and Bram coordinated a workshop in Dakar on Security Sector Reform and Governance in Africa, organised by the Africa Security Sector Network (ASSN) and the Geneva Centre for Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF). The meeting brought together OSF colleagues and predominantly African experts on the African security sector, to reflect on what can be learned from ASSN, DCAF and OSF in promoting good (security) governance, and incubate ideas to step up OSF engagement in this field.

25-27 April: Iskra and Pamela hosted Larisa Minasyan, Executive Director of OSF Armenia, David Amiryanyan, Deputy Director for Programs at OSF Armenia, Levon Barseghyan, Head of the Gyumri-based Asbarez Journalist Club, and Davit Khachatryan, legal expert and professor at Yerevan State University for an advocacy visit. The group met with EU policy-makers (EEAS; European Commission (EC); European Parliament (EP) Secretariat; political advisors and relevant MEPs) to discuss the new EU-Armenian agreement and concerns of corruption, electoral code reform and

constitutional reform, anti-discrimination legislation and justice sector reform in Armenia. The visit ended with a meeting of Brussels-based partner organisations working on Armenia.

27 April: Iskra attended a discussion at Carnegie Europe on "[Fighting Corruption in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood](#)", featuring OSF grantees Sarah Chayes and Miranda Patrucic.

28 April: Iskra supported Roman Romanov, Director of the Human Rights and Justice Program at the International Renaissance Foundation, to conduct advocacy with the EU institutions (EEAS and EU Support Group for Ukraine) on reform of policing and justice in Ukraine.

2-3 May: Srdjan and Ammar Abu Zayyad, director of the OSF Arab Regional Office, participated in a Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network conference in The Hague with Egyptian Human Rights Defenders and US CSOs working on Egypt. Topics included ways to guarantee the continuity of human rights work in Egypt in the context of EU advocacy.

- **Research team**

Annalisa and Counterpoint held a series of meetings with EU officials to reinforce the Bridges network and present the project to potential new members/partners. As a result, the Bridges Project team is exploring the opportunity of organising two seminars in partnership with the European Political Strategy Centre and the EP intergroup on Anti-Racism and Diversity.

- **Organisational activities**

25-29 April: Neil was in the US, where he joined the SMC retreat, a meeting with George Soros and the EUSR for the South Caucasus Salber, and meetings with colleagues (including FGP, OSJI, HRI, MENASWA, Burma, and others...)

25-29 April: Pearly drafted the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter expense report and shared the findings with the policy analysts.

29 April: Costanza was showered with words of praise at her farewell lunch and was warned that she can't shake us off that easily (George Soros is already planning a trip to Italy). We wish her all the best in her future endeavours!

## Upcoming OSEPI Events (5-13 May)

11 May: Marta is moderating the Women in International Security (WIIS) Brussels policy discussion on "Gender and Human Rights in CSDP missions".

12 May: OSEPI is hosting the Full Circle lunch event "Why the British don't get the EU." Jonathan Steinberg will discuss Britain's uneasy relationship with the European Union.

## Upcoming Events of Interest (5-13 May)

9 May: European Policy Centre event "The EU referendum in the UK and its Scottish dimension" Neil is participating.

*Feel free to reach out to colleagues attending these events for additional information.*

## Media Update

Srdjan explains why the Serbia election was NOT a defacto referendum on EU membership in his article "[Serbia election: EU grasping at straws.](#)"

OSF colleagues Zeljko Jovanovic and Goran Buldioski were featured in Politico with a [letter to the editor](#).