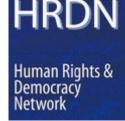
## Joint NGO Letter to the European Parliament on Proposals to **Halt Human Rights Activities**



Brussels, December 20, 2022

Peace Brigade International Euromed Rights International Federation for Human Rights

**Co-ordinating Members** 

- 3 (FIDH) Full Act Alliance EU Agir Ensemble pour les Droits de 2. l'Homme AidsFonds Amnesty International Association for the Prevention of Torture Brot für die Welt Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies Center for Reproductive Rights Christian Solidarity Worldwide Civil Rights Defenders 9. 10 Clean Cloths Campaign (CCC) Coalition for the International Criminal 11. 12 Court (CICC) Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) 13. 14. Conference of European Churches (CEC) 15. 16. 17. DEMAS DOCIF End FGM European Network Ensemble contre la peine de mort EU-Lat Network 18. 19. European Network for Central Africa 20 (EurAc) European Disability Forum 21 22. European Partnership for Democracy (EPD) 23. European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) 24. 25. Fair Trials Front Line Defenders (FLD) Free Press Unlimited Human Rights House Foundation 26. 27. (HRHF) Human Rights Watch (HRW) Human Rights Without Frontiers 28. 29. (HRWF) 30. 31. ILGA-Europe International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) 32 33. International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN) 34 nternational Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture (FIACAT) 35 International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR) International Planned Parenthood 36 Federation (IPPF) 37. International Rehabilitation Council for
- Torture Victims (IRCT) Justice and Peace 39 La Strada International
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- Minority Rights Group International Open Society Foundations Oxfam
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- Peace Brigades International (PBI) Penal Reform International
- 46 Plan EU Office
- 48 49 Protection International Quaker Council for European Affairs
- 50 Save the Children
- Search for Common Ground 51 52 Race & Equality
- Reporters without Borders
- 53. 54. Terre des Hommes International
- Federation 55 Netherlands Helsinki Committee
- 56. 57. /ictims Support Europe
- World Coalition against the Death Penalty
- World Organisation Against Torture 58 (OMCT)
- World Vision International 59

Dear President Metsola, Dear Presidents of the political groups of the European Parliament,

We are writing to express our greatest concerns over recent debates and proposals to freeze all activities of the European Parliament's Human Rights Subcommittee (DROI) and to stop all urgency resolutions, in reaction to allegations of corruption known as "Qatargate".

Over the years, the European Parliament has proved to be a strong, critical voice both inside and outside the EU, often filling the silence of other EU institutions. DROI has played a key role in that regard, helping to translate into action the principle that human rights are at the forefront of EU's foreign policy and of the engagement with its partners. DROI hearings have been a precious platform for countless human rights defenders, activists and civil society representatives from around the world to testify, often at great personal risk, on the abuses perpetrated by repressive governments.

Likewise, urgency resolutions have raised the cases of jailed or harassed human rights activists, journalists, lawyers and others, called out human rights violations, repressive legislation and abusive policies by governments and corporations, and encouraged the EEAS, Council, EU delegations and other institutions to make use of the wider EU human rights toolbox – including targeted sanctions, bilateral diplomacy, action at the UN, and trade-related measures - to address those abuses.

Parliament's scrutiny has contributed to the release of human rights defenders and political prisoners, to halting the adoption or triggering the reform of abusive legislation, and ultimately to human rights progress and accountability efforts around the world.

All this is something the European Parliament should feel proud, not ashamed of.

Efforts and investigations to get to the bottom of the allegations and securing justice are in everyone's interest; halting all human rights activities of the European Parliament while sweepingly calling into question the integrity and contribution of all civil society organizations in EU policy-making would be solely in the interest of perpetrators of human rights abuses, to the detriment of their victims.

The legacy of this crisis, and more broadly of this legislature, cannot and should not be the silencing of the European Parliament and the discrediting of all good human rights work Parliament has been carrying out for years. Rather, the institution should recommit to and double down on its efforts to speak up louder and stronger in the face of abuses, including those committed by any government who might have tried to exert undue influence on Parliament activities.

We hope all efforts in the opposite direction will be halted, and we stand ready to discuss these issues with you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely.

The Human Rights and Democracy Network, HRDN

The Human Rights and Democracy Network (HRDN) is an informal grouping of NGOs operating at EU level in the broader areas of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention. Participation in the network is open to non-governmental organizations which engage at EU level in the promotion of human rights, democracy and conflict prevention in and outside the FU

The vision of the HRDN is that human rights and democracy are placed at the heart of the EU's internal and external policy agenda. This vision should manifest itself in a EU that effectively protects human rights at home and is a force for positive change in the world. In pursuit of this vision, the network aims to influence EU and member state human rights policies and the programming of their funding instruments to promote democracy, human rights and sustainable peace