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## PRESS RELEASE

### TDIP members hear more on "the Algerian six", weigh in on delegation to Poland

In January 2002, Bosnian Federation police removed six Bosnian residents of Algerian origin from a Sarajevo prison and handed them over to US custody -- one day after the Bosnian Supreme Court had ordered their release. All six were then transferred to Guantanamo, where they still remain.

Yesterday, 20 November, Wolfgang Petritsch, former High Representative of the international community in Bosnia-Herzegovina, spoke to members of the TDIP (Temporary Committee on the alleged use of European countries by the CIA for the transport and illegal detention of prisoners) on the means which the US employed to gain custody of the six suspects.

As Mr. Petritsch noted, "the United States would have been ready to withdraw [its] support for the peace implementation mission" had the government of Bosnia-Herzegovina failed to hand over the "Algerian six".

"Were you able to do anything to prevent them from being deported?" asked rapporteur Claudio Fava (PES, IT). "The international community was *de facto* excluded", answered Mr. Petritsch. At the time, one had to weigh this case -- a clear breach of law and human rights, as he acknowledged -- against "the overall mission" of the international community in Bosnia-Herzegovina, he later explained. This was "a choice between bad and worse", he added: and "worse" would have been an American withdrawal from the international mission (which, as he saw it, would have produced its collapse).

You had to "weigh" this case against the US threat to withdraw, said Sophia in 't Veld (ALDE, NL), quoting Mr. Petritsch. "Wouldn't you call this blackmail?" she added.

The Committee then heard from Javier Aguado Zaragoza and Vincente Gonzalez Mota (both from the Spanish Audiencia Nacional), who are leading an inquiry into the alleged use of Spanish airports for illegal activities by the CIA. Obligated to keep many aspects of the case secret until the end of their investigation, the two men could not provide TDIP members with details of their inquiry.

The Committee also held a brief exchange of views on its recent delegation to Warsaw. Committee Chair Carlos Coelho reiterated most members' dissatisfaction with the level of cooperation on the part of the Polish authorities. It was, as he put it, "extremely unsatisfactory". The Polish side, he added, "did not show due respect to a delegation of [EU] parliamentarians". Given the "vague and contradictory answers" we received, said Mr. Fava, we are obliged, when reaching our conclusions, to say that we cannot confirm Poland's non-involvement: "we do not have the information to say that".

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