

Statement by the International Contact Group on Venezuela: Argen



The Members of the International Contact Group (ICG) on Venezuela are pleased to inform that Argentina has joined the ICG. They welcome Argentina's commitment to contribute to a peaceful and democratic solution to the crisis in Venezuela and look forward to the positive role this country will play as part of the ICG's efforts.

The International Contact Group will now bring together Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Panama, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Uruguay in a common effort to foster support to a peaceful and democratic way out of the crisis in Venezuela and to facilitate the access and increase of humanitarian aid to that country, particularly in the current context of an expanding Covid-19 pandemic.

Belarus: Declaration by the High Representative on behalf of the European Union on the presidential elections



On 9 August, Presidential elections took place in the Republic of Belarus.

The EU has been following the developments leading to the presidential elections closely. During the electoral campaign, the people of Belarus have demonstrated the desire for democratic change.

However, the elections were neither free nor fair.

State authorities deployed disproportionate and unacceptable violence causing at least one death and many injuries. Thousands of people were detained and the crackdown on freedoms of assembly, media and expression intensified. We call on the Belarusian authorities to release immediately and unconditionally all detained. Furthermore, credible reports of domestic observers show that the electoral process did not meet the international standards expected of an OSCE participating State.

The people of Belarus deserve better.

Since the 2015 release of political prisoners, the relationship between the EU and Belarus had improved. But without progress on human rights and the rule of law, the EU-Belarus relationship can only get worse.

It is against this background that we will be assessing the Belarusian authorities' actions to address the current situation and conducting an in-depth review of the EU's relations with Belarus. This may include, inter alia, taking measures against those responsible for the observed violence, unjustified arrests, and falsification of election results.

We call on Belarusian political leadership to initiate a genuine and inclusive dialogue with broader society to avoid further violence. The EU will continue to support a democratic, independent, sovereign, prosperous and stable Belarus.

EASO publishes a COI report: Afghanistan, Anti-Government Elements (AGEs)

On 10 August 2020, the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) published a Country of Origin Information (COI) report titled 'Afghanistan, Anti-Government Elements (AGEs)'

The [EASO COI report Afghanistan, Anti-Government Elements \(AGEs\)](#) provides an overview of the main Anti-Government Elements (AGEs) in Afghanistan, primarily the Taliban and Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP), with a focus on describing their modus operandi, structure and activities with respect to targeted killings and attacks on particular profiles.

The Taliban is an AGE that has been active in Afghanistan for decades. The Taliban leadership ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until 2001, when it was removed from power by US and international forces. The group has continued to conduct an insurgency following its removal. Since 2001, the Taliban have

preserved some key principles including a strict interpretation of sharia law in areas under their control. On 29 February 2020, in Doha, the US and the Taliban signed an 'Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan', after 18 years of war. Despite the agreement with the US, the Taliban have continued their attacks against the Afghan government forces in particular.

Other AGEs operating in Afghanistan and described in this report include Al Qaeda, Haqqani Network and foreign armed groups.

The report was drafted by EASO COI Sector in accordance with the [EASO COI Report Methodology](#). It was reviewed by experts from Denmark, Danish Immigration Service, The Netherlands, Office for Country Information and Language Analysis, Ministry of Justice and by ACCORD, the Austrian Centre for Country of Origin and Asylum Research and Documentation.

With 2.7 million refugees as of the end of 2019, Afghanistan was the [third largest country of origin of refugees in the world](#). Afghan continued to be the second most common citizenship of asylum applicants in the EU+ as of May 2020. The EU+ recognition rate for decisions issued to Afghan applicants dropped to 36 % in May, a considerable decrease from the 46 % in the first quarter of 2020 and lower than in Q4 2019 (50 %).

This report is part of a series of EASO COI reports on Afghanistan due to be published in 2020, which provide relevant information regarding topics such as customary law and informal dispute resolution, state actors, security situation and armed conflict developments, key-socio economic indicators.

[Glycoalkaloids in potatoes: public health risks assessed](#)



EFSA has assessed the risks to human and animal health related to the presence of glycoalkaloids in food and feed, particularly in potatoes and products derived from potatoes.

Glycoalkaloids are naturally occurring compounds found in the Solanaceae family of plants, which includes potatoes, tomatoes and aubergines.

Experts identified a health concern for infants and toddlers, considering both mean and high consumers. Among adults, there is a health concern for high consumers only. Glycoalkaloids poisoning can cause acute gastrointestinal symptoms, such as nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea.

Based on the latest available knowledge, EFSA derived a lowest observed adverse effect level of 1 milligram per kilogram of body weight per day. This equates to the lowest dose at which undesired effects are observed.

Peeling, boiling and frying can reduce the content of glycoalkaloids in food. For example, peeling potatoes can reduce their content by between 25 and 75%, boiling in water between 5 and 65%, and frying in oil between 20 and 90%.

[The Lao People's Democratic Republic joins TMclass](#)

August 10, 2020 [European Trade Mark and Design Network](#)

The Lao People's Democratic Republic joins TMclass



As of 10 August 2020, the Department of Intellectual Property under the Ministry of Science and Technology of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (DIP-LA) has joined TMclass with goods and services in both Lao and English.

[TMclass](#) offers users the opportunity to search and translate goods and services to and from any of the 44 available languages available.

This latest addition brings the total number of national and regional intellectual property offices, including ARIPO, OAPI, WIPO and EUIPO, in the tool to 82.

The integration of DIP-LA in TMclass is a concrete result of the [ARISE Plus Intellectual Property Rights](#) (ARISE+ IPR) programme funded by the European Union and implemented by the EUIPO.

You can find out more at [TMclass](#) and [ARISE+ IPR](#)

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