

Berlin (Written Press)
01/22/2009

Top National News

Obama makes plans to close Guantanamo

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (1), Welt (1), Süddeutsche Zeitung (1)

Top European News

Israeli troops withdraw from Gaza

On Wednesday Israel has completely withdrawn its troops from the Gaza strip. Israel's Foreign Minister Zippi Livni travelled to Brussels to meet the 27 EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs. The talks will mainly focus on humanitarian aid. Other important issues are the reopening of border crossings between Gaza and Israel as well as the fight against weapons smuggling.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (4), Welt (5), Financial Times Deutschland (9), Handelsblatt (6)

Institutional Affairs

EU debate in Austria

Austrian Federal Chancellor Fayman (SPÖ) on Wednesday urged his country not to become inattentive because its forecasts for unemployment and the deficit were above EU average. He demanded greater flexibility for the Maastricht criteria and shorter EU tender procedures. Foreign Minister Spindelegger (ÖVP) campaigned for the Treaty of Lisbon.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (4)

EU-critical party founded in the Czech Republic

In the Czech Republic, a second EU-critical party wants to participate in the European election in June. The independent former member of the EU Parliament Zelezny registered the group Libertas.cz which obviously feels belonging to the movement Libertas by the Irish EU opponent Ganley. Last week, the Czech EU-critical party SSO had announced its candidature.

Süddeutsche Zeitung (7)

Economy and Finances

EU Parliament changes financial rules

The EU Parliament wants to decide important rules for the financial markets before the European elections. This is about the Solvency II directive for insurance companies, the capital requirements directive for banks and the legal framework for rating agencies. In addition, EU Commissioner McCreevy wants to present bills for the regulation of the trade with credit derivatives as well as hedge funds.

Handelsblatt (27)

Commercial banks park less money with the ECB

The European Central Bank (ECB) is increasing the pressure on the commercial banks to lend money to each other again and has reduced its interest rate for the so-called deposit facility from two percent to one percent. Yesterday, the deposits fell from €238.9 bn to €184.1 bn.

Financial Times Deutschland (17), Frankfurter Rundschau (18)

Trichet does not see euro area in danger

ECB president Trichet does not believe that the cohesion of the euro area is put into question because of the financial and economic crisis. "It is the task of the governments to pursue a more sustainable policy", he said. The leeway of the Stability Pact could be used, however, the Pact has to be observed.

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (12)

Fear brings flexibility

The global economic crisis has revealed the weak points of the European monetary union. The EU member states drifted apart as each of them only focused on national policy.

Politicians and scientists, among others Pervenche Berès, chairwoman of the European Parliament's economic and monetary affairs committee, give a forecast to the year 2020.
Capital (32)

External Relations

"The ceasefire is still fragile"

In an interview EU Chief Diplomat Javier Solana talks about the role of the EU in the Gaza conflict. The EU, he says, was engaged in intensive diplomacy in order to promote an enduring political solution in Gaza.

Tagesspiegel (6)

EU demands Moscow double murder to be cleared up

The EU Commission has demanded that the double murder of a human rights attorney and a journalist in Moscow be cleared up. They were both shot down in the city centre on Monday. A spokesman of President of the Commission José Manuel Barroso declared that the Commission was "shocked about this incident".

Süddeutsche Zeitung (7), Tagesspiegel (6)

Five lessons for diplomats

In a guest article Javier Solana, EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, advises the new US President Barack Obama and his team on the handling of international problems.

Financial Times Deutschland (24)

Energy

EU expands gas network

Russia had suspended gas supplies through the Ukraine for almost two weeks. Now the EU Commission wants to invest 3.5 billion euros in the European energy network and future technologies. Furthermore, the connections between the national networks within the EU are to be improved. President of the EU Commission José Manuel Barroso will present a list of all projects on 28 January.

Handelsblatt (1, 3)

"EU is better prepared for bird flu than for gas crises"

In an interview Maciej Wozniak, Chief Adviser to the Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk on energy security, talks about the gas dispute between Russia and the Ukraine. Poland claims a review of the 2004 EU directive on the security of natural gas supply.

Welt (10)

Culture

Brussels

Jochen Bittner comments on the reactions to the installation of the Czech artist David Cerny in the EU Council building in Brussels.

Zeit (4)

Agriculture

Stupid or ignorant? / by Petra Pinzler

EU Commissioner Neelie Kroes wants to reactivate export aids for milk products. This step, however, does harm to the world's poor and ruins the EU's image. For whoever „reintroduces export aids is a cynic. And whoever is watching, is one, too.“

Zeit (25)

„Europe needs more time“

In an interview, Hugh Grant, Monsanto's chief executive, talks about genetic engineering and better quality seeds. Monsanto is the maker of genetically modified crops. Grant is convinced that EU farmers will want Monsanto's „high-tech“ seeds soon.

Zeit (21)

Social Affairs

Czechs want women to be housewives

The Czech government has put childcare issues on its agenda for the coming months of its EU presidency, emphasising the importance of childcare by the parents as an alternative to crèches, babysitters and career. MEP Hiltrud Beyer of the Green Party considers this a departure from equal rights policies.

Tageszeitung taz (7), Frankfurter Rundschau (10)

EU criticises youth welfare offices

The EU Parliament's Committee on Petitions has asked the German government to better monitor the work of German youth welfare offices.

Süddeutsche Zeitung (7)

Taxation

EU blocks fight against tax havens

Germany and France would like to take as strong action as the USA against tax havens. However, this is blocked within the EU by Austria, Belgium and Luxembourg. Now Federal Minister of Finance Steinbrück is planning a national solo attempt.

Frankfurter Rundschau (4)

Environment

Billions for the exchequer

The EU decisions on emission trade will bring the Federal Ministry of Finance lots of money at the expense of the climate and the consumers.

Capital (38)

Transports

EU wants to reduce bureaucracy

The EU wants to treat maritime transportation as internal transportation. It also intends to reduce bureaucracy. Up to now, the same regulations apply to transports between EU ports and international transports, said EU Commissioner Antonio Tajani.

Welt (12)



EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT
Informationsbüro für Deutschland

GERMAN PRESS REVIEW

Berlin, January 22th, 2009

Guantanamo

The parties within the German government are struggling about a common position on accommodating prisoners from Guantanamo. **EP President Hans-Gert PÖTTERING** has demanded that the prisoners should be offered a new home in Europe. **MEP Manfred WEBER** asked why Europe should allow potentially dangerous persons to threaten people here.

Stuttgarter Zeitung p. 4
Passauer Neue Presse p.1

New rules for financial markets

The **European Parliament** is going to decide about a new rules for the financial markets. In detail, three legislations are in preparation: a directive for insurer called Solvency II, a directive on equity capital and a new regulation for rating agencies. The three **rapporteurs, Peter SKINNER, Othmar KARA and Jean-Paul GAUZÈS**, and the negotiating processes are portrayed by the *Handelsblatt*.

Handelsblatt p. 27

Child care

The Czech government says in its working programme for the EU Presidency that they want to enhance child care at home towards child care outside. **MEP Hiltrud BREYER** is afraid that this initiative would weaken gender equality aims that the European Council has adopted in Barcelona.

Frankfurter Rundschau p.10
die tageszeitung p.7

Martime traffic

The COM wants to reduce bureaucracy in maritime traffic. It is going to propose simpler rules for the traffic within the European Union. The **EP** and the Council have to agree.

Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung p.

Youth welfare

The petitions Committee of the **EP** has demanded that the German government should better supervise Youth welfare. The Committee had received 250 petitions in the last 2 years from German parents who complained about interferences in their family life.

Süddeutsche Zeitung p. 7



EUROPÄISCHES PARLAMENT
Informationsbüro für Deutschland

GERMAN PRESS REVIEW

**EP elections:
Greens are going
to nominate
candidates**

The German Greens are going to vote on their nomination list and their election programme for the **EP elections** on the weekend. So far it is just regarded as secure that **MEP Rebecca HARMS** is going to be top candidate, followed by the former party head Reinhard Bütikofer. A hard struggle for the other positions is expected.

**New EU critical
party**

In the Czech Republic another European critical party was founded by current **MEP Vladimir ZELEZNY**. With the name Libertas.cz a connection to the Irish movement against the Lisbon treaty was established.

Stuttgarter Zeitung p.2
Süddeutsche Zeitung p. 7
