



**COUNCIL OF
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2013 sees strengthened EU human rights policy

The Foreign Affairs Council has today adopted the EU Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy in the World in 2013.

It covers the EU's work and achievements in the area of human rights across the full range of external relations policy areas in 2013, including trade, development, and the Common Security and Defence Policy. It tells the story of the EU's consistent efforts to advance internationally the values and principles upon which the Union is built and illustrates the continued engagement of the High Representative Catherine Ashton and the EU Special Representative for Human Rights Stavros Lambrinidis to promote the universality of human rights around the world.

2013 marked the accomplishment of a number of key objectives, including the adoption of EU Guidelines to protect freedom of religion and belief, and the adoption of Guidelines to promote and protect the enjoyment of all human rights by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons.

Almost 150 human rights country strategies were adopted in 2013. These strategies identify the top priorities for EU action on human rights and democracy in every country in which it is represented.

The EU also held human rights dialogues and consultations with 30 partner countries and regional groupings. A human rights dialogue with South Africa and with Myanmar as well as consultations with the Republic of Korea were held for the first time.

P R E S S

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Civil society continued to be the main recipient of funding from the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). More than 530 new EIDHR initiatives were launched, adding to the more than 2 500 ongoing EIDHR projects already being implemented in the field. The EU is a strong supporter of human rights defenders who play a key role in furthering the cause of human rights, but frequently find themselves the target of oppression and coercion.

More information:

http://eeas.europa.eu/human_rights/index_en.htm
