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We, the members of the academic community, are responsible for forging and reinforcing alliances for and protecting human rights space....

The output of the January 22nd, 2015 [workshop 'FRAME-ing inclusive approaches to EU human rights, democracy and rule of law'](#) (organised by FRAME partner the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights – SIM, Utrecht) has brought to focus themes that lie at the very heart of FRAME. Untying concepts with the view of their translation into policy terms, thus marrying theory and practice, facing the 'ugly truths' and advancing uncomfortable, yet just and human rights favourable solutions – these are the recommendations taken home by all the participants of the workshop.

In particular, the underlying question examined in the course of all four panels pertained to the issue of including/mainstreaming/prioritising human rights, democracy and rule of law concerns in the various policies of the European Union.

The notion of inclusion was examined in relation to the 'mother' of EU human rights – principle of equality whose content has been re-examined by the keynote speaker Prof. Sandra Fredman of Oxford University.

Her contribution was subsequently fuelled by the news from the EU Commission equality and non-discrimination front delivered by Mr. Andreas Stein and the European Committee on Social Rights one delivered by Prof. Colm O'Cinneide (University College London).

What was simultaneously challenged was the practice of isolating human rights as separate policy

concerns. Dr. Katrin Kinzelbach provided substance to the critique of EU-China human rights dialogues; her approach re-echoing in the contributions of Charles-Michele Goerts and Javier Couso.

Finally, the call for reinforcing the human rights alliance was made – with the acknowledgment that there are a number of far-fetched initiatives undertaken in the EU external policy sphere (Ms. Veronique Arnault, former Director, Human Rights and Democracy, EEAS) and intervention on the part of strong democratic countries if the human rights, democracy, and rule of law are to be attained by transition countries is needed (Dr. Anja Mihr, The Hague Institute for Global Justice & Utrecht University).

The strong concluding statement referring of the significance of the human rights approaches came from Dr. Katrin Kinzelbach who reminded that at times of shrinking human rights space, it is the responsibility of researchers to forge and reinforce alliances for human rights, especially at times of weakened perception of EU from the outside. Within the FRAME project we shall take this responsibility even more seriously.

The findings of this workshop will provide input for the ongoing research in the FRAME [work package 3 'Underlying Conceptions of Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law'](#).