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## When EP issues enter the Aula Magna

Human rights studies and learning at EIUC provide its students with the opportunity to bridge the Aula Magna to the daily, realistic concerns of the European and international political agendas. *How are these topics dealt with at the European Parliament's level? And how do our international students approach such debates? Which are the issues tackled by the different EP Committees and SubCommittees that are more often raised in class?*

According to the article below –by a student of the E.MA class 2013/2014, Chandra Jeevanathan- it links closely to the case presented at the moot court session: violation of the Freedom of expression.

On September 18th 2013, approximately 20 Greenpeace activists, a freelance photographer and a freelance video journalist were detained in the city of Murmansk following a peaceful protest against Gazprom's drilling platform Prirazlomnaya. They were later transferred to a jail in St. Petersburg, the reason for the transfer remains unknown. The protest was part of Greenpeace's global campaign to protect the Arctic. They were initially charged with piracy by Russia but later these were changed to hooliganism and other charges that carry up to ten years imprisonment.

The act of arrest and the charges brought against the Greenpeace members and the journalists received a strong reaction from the European Union and members of its Parliament. The parliamentarians called the charges against the activists and journalists as disproportionate and urged the Council and the European Commission to take actions ensuring their immediate release. Over 90 members of the European Parliament have signed a solidarity statement in support of this.

Mikael Gustafsson from Sweden addressing the arrest in the European Parliament debate said '*Politics*

*begins and ends in the streets; or in international waters as the case may be. That Russia captured activists from an international environmental organisation in international waters is a threat to democracy, a threat to free speech and a threat to the right to demonstrate'.* In connecting the dots from the European Parliament to the E.MA syllabus and the practicality of the lessons thought in the Aula Magna, the right concerning freedom of expression and opinion was raised during the E.MA Moot Court session. The right to freedom of expression is one that plays a very significant role in present day and time given its very nature of being involved in the very centre of human, state and international bodies/organisations interactions alike. This serves as an evident to the relevance of the E.MA syllabus to the present and on-going human rights issues.