

BUREAU OF THE ASSEMBLY

AS/Bur/CB (2015) 13

16 December 2015

## To the Members of the Assembly

### Synopsis of the meeting held in London on 14 December 2015

The Bureau of the Assembly, meeting on Monday 14 December 2015 in London, with Ms Anne Brasseur, President of the Assembly, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Communication by the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe:** took note of the communication;
- **Standing Committee (Sofia, 27 November 2015):** approved the follow-up proposals made by the Secretary General of the Assembly as follows:
  - i. *Challenge on procedural grounds of the still unratified credentials of the parliamentary delegation of the United Kingdom:* took note of the opinion adopted by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs concluding that the credentials should be ratified, and decided to transmit it to the Assembly through the Progress Report;
  - ii. *Current affairs debate on Combating international terrorism while protecting Council of Europe standards and values:* took note of the proposal submitted by all political groups to hold a debate under urgent procedure on the same topic during the first part-session of 2016;
  - iii. *Sofia declaration:* decided to seize the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy for a report on *Call for a Council of Europe Summit to defend and promote democratic security in Europe*;
- **First part-session of 2016 (Strasbourg, 25-29 January):**
  - i. *Preliminary draft agenda:* updated the preliminary draft agenda;
  - ii. *Requests for debate under urgent procedure and/or current affairs debate:* decided to propose to the Assembly to hold a debate under urgent procedure on *Combating international terrorism while protecting Council of Europe standards and values*, to be held on Wednesday 27 January in the afternoon, and to refer the matter to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy for report and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for opinion;
- **Election observation:**
  - i. *Schedule of elections:* took note of the elections calendar for 2016 as presented in the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly;
  - ii. *Armenia: referendum on constitutional reforms (6 December 2015):* took note of the press release of the electoral mission;

- iii. *“The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”*: early parliamentary elections (24 April 2016, date to be confirmed): subject to receiving an invitation, decided to observe these elections and constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 20 members (EPP/CD: 8; SOC: 7, ALDE: 2, EC: 2, UEL: 1 - in accordance with the D'Hondt system) and the co-rapporteurs on post-monitoring dialogue; and authorised a pre-electoral mission;
- iv. *Meeting of the Chairpersons of ad committees for the observation of elections*: took note that the next meeting would take place during the first part-session of 2016;
- **References and transmissions to committees**: considered and approved the references as presented in Appendix 1, subject to ratification by the Assembly;
  - **Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the 2016 financial year**: took note of the information provided by the Secretary General of the Assembly;
  - **Parliamentary co-operation activities: work plan 2016**: took note of the information provided by the Director General of the Secretariat of the Assembly;
  - **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize**: approved the revised Regulations, subject to ratification by the Assembly in the Progress Report (Appendix 2), decided that they would apply as of the 2016 edition of the Prize and took note of the calendar for 2016;
  - **European Conference of Presidents of Parliament 2016**: took note of the draft programme of the Conference, which would take place on 15-16 September 2016 in Strasbourg;
  - **Co-operation with the European Parliament and other European Union institutions (June to December 2015)**: took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly;
  - **Apportionment of the allocation to political groups for 2016**: approved the proposal for the apportionment of the allocation;
  - **Composition of the Committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights**: on the basis of proposals submitted by the Socialist Group, nominated Mr Arcadio Díaz Tejera (Spain) and Mr Michael McNamara (Ireland) as titular members, subject to ratification by the Assembly;
  - **Other business**: authorised Ms Liliane Maury-Pasquier (Switzerland, SOC) to participate in the parliamentary hearing on The World Drug Problem: Taking Stock and Strengthening the Global Response, organised jointly by the Inter-parliamentary Union and the United Nations, to be held in New York (United States) on 8-9 February 2016;
  - **Dates and places of next meetings**:  
  
Monday, 25 January 2016, Strasbourg at 8 am;  
Friday, 29 January 2016, Strasbourg at 8.30 am;  
Thursday, 3 March 2016, Paris at 3 pm.

Sonia Sirtori

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Copy to:

Secretary General of the Assembly  
Director General, Director and all staff of the Secretariat of the Assembly  
Secretaries of National Delegations and of Political Groups of the Assembly  
Secretaries of observer and partner for democracy delegations  
Secretary General of the Congress  
Secretary to the Committee of Ministers  
Directors General  
Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe  
Director of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights  
Director of Communication  
Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe

## Appendix 1

### A. References and transmissions to committees

Doc. [13840](#), motion for a resolution, Democracy and the European Union: no further action;

Doc. [13900](#) motion for a resolution, The promotion of social competencies through education for a more cohesive society: transmission to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for information*;

Doc. [13903](#), motion for a resolution Integration of refugees in times of critical pressure: learning from recent experience and examples of best practice, reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*;

Doc. [13905](#), motion for a resolution, Jurisdictional immunity of international organisations and rights of their staff: consultation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *on a possible follow-up*;

Doc. [13906](#), motion for a resolution, Towards a European Earned Citizenship Programme for refugees: transmission to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for information*;

Doc. [13907](#), motion for a resolution, The political rights of persons with disabilities: a democratic issue: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*;

Doc. [13908](#), motion for a resolution, Gender inequality in migrant access to education and employment: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on "Access to school and education for all children"* (Ref. 4053);

Doc. [13910](#), motion for a recommendation, Freedom of movement as a means of protecting human rights: transmission to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for information*.

### B. Extension of references

Doc. [13343](#), motion for a recommendation, Cultural democracy (Ref. 4020 of 27 January 2014 – validity: 27 January 2016): extension until 30 June 2016;

Doc. [13404](#), motion for a resolution, Educational and cultural networks of communities living abroad (Ref. 4028 of 7 March 2014 – validity: 7 March 2016): extension until 30 June 2016.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Regulations of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Article 1: The Prize**

The Václav Havel Human Rights Prize shall be awarded by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in partnership with the Václav Havel Library and the Charta 77 Foundation every year in order to reward outstanding civil society action in the defence of human rights. The Prize shall be awarded in memory of Václav Havel, playwright, fighter against totalitarianism, leader of the 1989 Velvet Revolution, Czechoslovak and Czech President, and an enduring symbol of opposition to despotism.

#### **Article 2: Nature**

The Prize shall consist of a sum of sixty thousand euros, which may be subject to periodic adjustment, a trophy and a diploma commending the Prizewinner(s)' outstanding contribution to the cause of human rights.

#### **Article 3: Eligibility**

Individuals or non-governmental institutions who or which are active in the defence of human rights may be eligible for consideration. Current members of the Parliamentary Assembly and deceased individuals are not eligible.

#### **Article 4: Nominations**

1. Nominations for the Prize must reach the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly before 30 April each year. They shall be signed by at least five sponsors, other than the nominee, on the special form appended to these Regulations.
2. Nominations shall provide details of the nominee's action(s) in the defence of human rights and specify the reasons why the nominee's action(s) can be considered to be outstanding. All relevant supporting documents shall be provided.
3. Nominations may be submitted in one of the two official languages of the Council of Europe: English or French.

#### **Article 5: Selection Panel**

1. A Selection Panel comprising the President of the Assembly or a person designated by him/her, and six independent persons with recognised moral standing in the field of human rights shall examine the nominations, submit a shortlist of three nominees to the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly for information and, subsequently, designate the Prizewinner(s) for the year in question (see also Articles 6 and 7 below).
2. The six independent experts referred to in the preceding paragraph shall not be current members of the Assembly. Three members shall be appointed by the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly and three members by the Václav Havel Library and the Charta 77 Foundation. The six independent experts shall be appointed for a two-year period, renewable twice.
3. The Selection Panel shall be chaired by the President of the Assembly or the person designated by him/her.

#### **Article 6: Decision on the Prizewinner(s)**

1. The Selection Panel shall decide on any issue of conflict of interest involving its members.
2. The Selection Panel shall, in a first sitting, draw up a shortlist of three nominees. The names of these nominees shall subsequently be made public by the President of the Assembly.

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<sup>1</sup> As approved by the Bureau on 7 March 2013 and revised on 14 December 2015.

3. In the event that, the Selection Panel considers that none of the nominations put forward is sufficiently outstanding, it shall inform the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly and the Václav Havel Library and the Charta 77 Foundation accordingly.
4. In a second sitting, the Panel shall designate the Prizewinner out of the shortlist. This decision shall be taken by an absolute majority of the votes cast, the day before the opening of the Fourth part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly.
5. If the Panel considers more nominations to be of equal merit, more than one Prizewinner may be designated to equally share the Prize.
6. The name of the Prizewinner shall be announced by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly in plenary, during the opening of the Fourth part-session of the Assembly.
7. The calendar of events shall be as follows:
  - a. 30 April: deadline for submission of nominees for the Prize;
  - b. end of August/beginning of September: first meeting of the Selection Panel (Prague); selection of a shortlist of three nominees;
  - c. Sunday before the Fourth part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly: second meeting of the Selection Panel (Strasbourg), selection of the Prizewinner(s) from the shortlist.

#### **Article 7: Award Ceremony**

8. The Prize shall be awarded at a ceremony which shall take place in Strasbourg on the Monday of the Fourth part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly.
9. The former Czech First Lady, Ms Dagmar Havlova, shall be invited to honour the ceremony with her presence.
10. The Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly shall approve the arrangements for the ceremony.

#### **Article 8: Conference in honour of Prizewinner**

11. The Václav Havel Library shall organise, at a later date, an international conference in Prague in honour of the Prizewinner(s).