



SECRETARIAT

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To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meeting held in Reykjavik, Iceland 26 September 2016

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Reykjavik on 26 September 2016, with Mr Mogens Jensen (Denmark, SOC) in the Chair:

- heard a welcome address by Mr Einar K. Guðfinnsson, Speaker of the Parliament of Iceland, and by Mr Karl Garðarsson, Chairperson of the Icelandic delegation to the PACE,
- held an exchange of views with Ms Lilja Alfreðsdóttir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iceland,
- heard an intervention by Mr Skúli Magnússon, Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Law, University of Iceland, guest speaker on "Icelandic Endeavours for Constitutional Reforms";

as regards:

- the **Terrorism: #NoHateNoFear** initiative: held a hearing with the participation of Mr Pedro Agramunt, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, and Mr Bjorn Ihler, Norway, Academic, Activist, Writer and Filmmaker, an Utøya survivor;
- **Funding of the Terrorist Group Daesh** (*Rapporteur: Mr Phil Wilson, United Kingdom, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur, considered an introductory memorandum, and held an exchange of views;
- **Open discussion on current issues:**
 - heard a statement by Mr Pedro Agramunt, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, on his visit to Turkey on 1 and 2 September 2016, held an exchange of views and decided to continue this discussion at its next meeting, with the participation of Mr Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights;
 - took note of a statement by Mr Oleksii Goncharenko (Ukraine, EC) regarding the elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation and decided to return to this matter at one of its next meetings;
- **Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic** (*Rapporteur: Mr Alain Destexhe, Belgium, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his fact-finding visit to Bishkek from 7 to 9 September 2016, followed by an exchange of views;

- **Appointment of rapporteurs:**
 - postponed the appointment of a Rapporteur on the *Counter-Narratives to Terrorism*;
 - appointed Mr Dirk Van der Maelen (Belgium, SOC) as Rapporteur for opinion on *Lessons from the “Panama Papers” to ensure fiscal and social justice*, subject to his declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - appointed Ms Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE) as Rapporteur for opinion on the *Compatibility of Sharia law with the European Convention on Human Rights: can States Parties to the Convention be signatories of the “Cairo Declaration”?*, subject to her declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
- **References to Committee:** called for candidates for reports on *Setting minimal standards for electoral systems in order to offer the basis for free and fair elections* and on *The political transition in Egypt*;
- **Consultation of the Committee by the Bureau on possible follow-up:** with respect to the motion for a resolution on *Human rights in the relations between the European Union and Cuba*, further to an exchange of views and a vote, decided to recommend to the Bureau of the Assembly that no further action be taken;
- **Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD):** approved the proposal of the Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD to ask the Bureau of the Assembly to be seized for a new report;
- **Appointment of representatives of the Committee to external events:** appointed Mr Deniz Baykal (Turkey, SOC) to participate in the Joint Seminar of the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM) and the Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships (PCNP) of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Rome, 27-29 October 2016;
- **World Forum for Democracy on Democracy and equality – does education matter?** (Strasbourg, 7-9 November 2016): took note of the programme, made an additional call to join the *ad hoc* Committee of the Bureau to participate in the Forum and proposed Mr René Rouquet (France, SOC) to be appointed;
- **Other business:**
 - took note of the document adopted by the Committee of the Procedures, Immunities and Institutional Affairs (AS/Pro(2016)20def) concerning the adoption of reports in committees and in plenary session;
 - welcomed its Chairperson’s proposal to invite the Committee to hold a meeting on Bornholm Island during the 2017 Danish political festival "Folkemødet" (The People's Meeting), from 14 to 16 June 2017;
- **Authorisations by the Committee:** authorised Mr Michele Nicoletti to carry out a fact-finding visit to Spain, by the end of 2016, and to participate in a workshop on *Corruption and its trends: A policy challenge*, which will take place in Venice on 2 December 2016, both in the framework of the preparation of his report on *Corruption as governance regime: a barrier to institutional efficiency and progress*;
- **Changes in the composition of the Sub-Committees:** approved the request by Mr Andrei Neguta (Republic of Moldova, SOC) to become member of the Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD;
- **Next meetings:** confirmed the forthcoming meetings as follows:
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly’s 4th part-session, 10-14 October 2016
 - Paris, 7 November 2016
 - New York, 7-9 December 2016, Sub-Committee on External Relations
 - Paris, 15 December 2016.

D. Chatzivassiliou, J. Ary, P. Chevtchenko

cc. 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