



SECRETARIAT

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14 October 2016

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meetings held in Strasbourg from 10 to 13 October 2016

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Strasbourg from 10 to 13 October 2016, with Mr Mogens Jensen (Denmark, SOC) and Ms Maria Guzenina (Finland, SOC) in the Chair:

Monday 10 October 2016, 14:00 – 15:00, room 9, as regards:

– **Open discussion on current issues:** heard a statement by Mr Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights, on his visit to Turkey from 27 to 29 September 2016, followed by an exchange of views;

Tuesday 11 October 2016, 08:30 – 10:00, room 1, as regards:

– **Call for a Council of Europe Summit to defend and promote democratic security in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Michele Nicoletti, Italy, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and considered an introductory memorandum; also heard a statement by Mr René Rouquet, Chairperson of the French delegation to the Assembly, on the colloquium on *Is the idea of the defence of human rights in Europe outdated? The Council of Europe is more necessary than ever before*, organised by the delegation in Paris on 12 September 2016, followed by an exchange of views;

– **Lessons from the “Panama Papers” to ensure fiscal and social justice** (*Rapporteur for Opinion: Mr Dirk Van der Maelen, Belgium, SOC*): considered and approved the Committee’s opinion, including 7 amendments to the draft resolution presented by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development;

– **Enlarged Debate on the Activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2015-2016:** heard a statement by Ms Theodora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD; took note of the report by the Secretary General of the OECD, Mr Angel Gurría, and held an exchange of views with the delegations of the national Parliaments of OECD member States which are not members of the Council of Europe;

– **The relations of the Council of Europe with Kazakhstan** (*Rapporteur: Mr Axel Fischer, Germany, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur, considered an introductory memorandum, and held an exchange of views with two members of the Senate of Kazakhstan, Mr Kairat Ichshanov and Mr Georgiy Kim;

– **Sub-Committee on External Relations:** heard a statement by Ms Aleksandra Djurović (Serbia, EPP/CD), Vice-Chairperson of the Sub-Committee, on the preparation of the meeting at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 7 to 9 December 2016, and took note that the Chairperson had invited the Chairperson and representatives of the Committee on Political Issues and International Co-operation of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS IPA) for an exchange of views with the Sub-Committee in Paris in November or December 2016, as agreed by the Sub-Committee on 22 June 2016;

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<http://assembly.coe.int/extranet>.

Tuesday 11 October 2016, 14:00 – 15:30, room 1, as regards:

- The **Terrorism: #NoHateNoFear** initiative: held a joint debate with the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, with the participation of Mr Pedro Agramunt, President of the Parliamentary Assembly; Ms Luciana Milani and Mr Antoine Leiris, whose daughter and wife respectively were killed in the Bataclan attack on 13 November 2015; and Mr David Anderson Q.C., Independent Reviewer of the United Kingdom's Anti-Terrorism Legislation;

Wednesday 12 October 2016, 14:30 – 15:30, room 9, as regards:

- **Political consequences of the conflict in Ukraine** (*Rapporteur: Ms Kristýna Zeličková, Czech Republic, ALDE*): took position on the 16 amendments to the draft resolution;

Thursday 13 October 2016, 08:30 – 10:00, room 9, as regards:

- **Situation in Lebanon and challenges for regional stability and European security** (*Rapporteur: Mr Tobias Zech, Germany, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and considered a revised preliminary draft report;

– **Work programme:**

- Following a proposal by Mr Talip Küçükcan (Turkey, EC) and in the light of the content of the motion on *Counter-Narratives to Terrorism*, decided to ask the Bureau of the Assembly to change the reference and refer it to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for report and to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy for opinion;
- Appointment of rapporteurs:
 - appointed Ms Elena Centemero (Italy, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur on *Setting minimal standards for electoral systems in order to offer the basis for free and fair elections* and heard from her a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - appointed Mr Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE) as Rapporteur on *The political transition in Egypt* and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - appointed Mr Jean-Claude Mignon (France, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur on *The situation in Aleppo* (subject to the decision by the Bureau and the referral by the Assembly) and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;

- **Call for candidates:** called for candidates for the report on the *Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco*;

- **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 Ms Olena Sotnyk (Ukraine, ALDE) and Mr Krzysztof Truskolaski (Poland, ALDE) to be appointed; and drew the attention of the members to proceed to their registration on line on the Forum web site;

– **Open discussion on current issues (cont'd):**

- heard a statement by Mr Oleksii Goncharenko (Ukraine, EC) on the recent elections to the State Duma of the Russian Federation;
- heard a statement by Mr Saidulla Nyshanov, member of the Partner for Democracy Delegation of Kyrgyzstan;
- took note of a letter from the Chairperson of Turkish delegation to the PACE inviting a delegation of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy headed by the Chairperson of the Committee to Turkey for a working visit to exchange views on the recent developments in Turkey; decided to accept this invitation (subject to the authorisation of the Bureau), to form an *ad hoc* Sub-Committee on recent developments in Turkey, composed of 5 members of the Committee - one from each political group - and the Chairperson of the Committee, who will act

as Chairperson of the *ad hoc* Sub-Committee, and agreed the dates of 20-23 November 2016 (including travelling) for this visit;

- took note of a second invitation, by the Chairperson of the Turkish delegation to the PACE, that the first meeting of the Committee in 2017 be held in Turkey and decided to come back to this matter at one of its next meetings;

– **Authorisations by the Committee:**

- authorised Mr Andrea Rigoni (Italy, ALDE), Rapporteur on the *Situation in Belarus*, to participate in the Council of Europe Conference on *Follow-up to the recommendations of international Election Observation Missions in the countries of the Eastern Partnership*, which will take place in Venice on 24 and 25 October 2016 (at no cost to the Assembly);
- approved the request by Mr Axel Fischer (Germany, EPP/CD) to carry out a fact-finding visit to Kazakhstan by the end of the year 2016, in the framework of the preparation of his report on *The relations of the Council of Europe with Kazakhstan* (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly);
- authorised Mr Michele Nicoletti (Italy, SOC), Rapporteur on *Call for a Council of Europe Summit to defend and promote democratic security in Europe* to carry out a fact-finding visit to London, United Kingdom, by the end of the year 2016, in order to meet with UK authorities in the framework of the preparation of his report;

– **Changes in the composition of the Sub-Committees:**

- appointed Ms Nina Kasimati (Greece, UEL) member of the Sub-Committee on the Middle East and Arab World to replace Mr Georgios Psychogios (UEL), who is no longer a member of the Committee;
- appointed Mr José Ramón García Hernández (Spain, EPP/CD), with Ms Soraya Rodríguez Ramos (SOC) as his alternate and Mr Adão Silva (Portugal, EPP/CD) as members of the member of the Sub-Committee on External Relations;

– **Other business:**

- agreed to the request by Mr Andrea Rigoni (Italy, ALDE), Rapporteur on *The situation in Belarus*, to organise a hearing during the meeting in Paris on 7 November 2016, with two members of House of Representatives of Belarus, and the request of Mr Phil Wilson (United Kingdom, SOC), Rapporteur on the *Funding of the terrorist group Daesh*, to organise a hearing during the same meeting;
- decided to transmit to the Bureau of the Assembly the request for the extension until 31 July 2017 of the reference on *The situation in Belarus*;

– **Next meetings:** confirmed the forthcoming meetings as follows:

- Paris, 7 November 2016
- Ankara, Turkey, 21-22 November 2016, *ad hoc* Sub-Committee on recent developments in Turkey (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly)
- New York, 7-9 December 2016, Sub-Committee on External Relations
- Paris, 15 December 2016.

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The **Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World** (of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy), meeting in Strasbourg on 12 October 2016, with Mr Titus Corlăţean (Romania, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Situation in the Middle East:** heard a statement by the Chairperson on the situation in Syria and in the Palestinian Territories; heard a statement by Ms Josette Durrieu (France, SOC) on the parliamentary elections in Jordan, and held an exchange of views;
- **Future work:** discussed the possibility of holding a meeting in Tunis (Tunisia), and asked the Secretariat to pursue this question;
- **Date and place of the next meeting:** left it to the Chairperson to convene its next meeting.

D. Chatzivassiliou, J. Ary, P. Chevtchenko, S. Arzilli

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