



SECRETARIAT

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29 June 2018

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meetings held in Strasbourg from 25 to 27 June 2018

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Strasbourg from 25 to 27 June 2018, with Ms Ria Oomen-Ruijten (Netherlands, EPP/CD) in the Chair:

Monday 25 June 2018, 14:00 – 15:00, room 9, as regards:

- **Democracy hacked? How to respond?** (*Rapporteur: Mr Frithjof Schmidt, Germany, SOC*): held an exchange of views on **security in elections** with the participation of Ms Simona Granata-Menghini, Deputy Secretary of the Council of Europe Venice Commission, and on **information disorder** with the participation of Mr Patrick Penninckx, Head of the Information Society Department of the Council of Europe Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law;

Tuesday 26 June 2018, 14:00 – 15:30, room 9, as regards:

- **Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)** (*Rapporteur: Mr Hendrik Daems, Belgium, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and considered an outline for report;
- **The activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2017-2018**: held an exchange of views on the basis of an outline for report proposed by the OECD;
- **Setting minimum standards for electoral systems in order to offer the basis for free and fair elections** (*Rapporteur: Ms Elena Centemero, Italy, EPP/CD*): thanked the Rapporteur for her work, held an exchange of views on the basis of an introductory memorandum prepared by the Chairperson and took note of her availability to complete the report once the mandate of Ms Centemero came to an end;
- **Assessing political consequences of foreign funding of Islam in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Ms Doris Fiala, Switzerland, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur, decided to change the title as follows: *Regulating foreign funding of Islam in Europe in order to prevent radicalisation and Islamophobia* and approved her proposal to schedule the adoption of this report by the Committee at its meeting on 11 September 2018, with a view to an Assembly debate during the October 2018 part-session;
- **Open discussion on current issues**: heard statements by members who took part in the mission to observe the early presidential and parliamentary elections organised in Turkey on 24 June 2018 and held an exchange of views with the Chairperson of the Turkish delegation;

Wednesday 27 June 2018, 14:00 – 15:30, room 9, as regards:

- **Role and mission of the Parliamentary Assembly: main challenges for the future** (*Rapporteur: Mr Tiny Kox, Netherlands, UEL*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur including a declaration of absence of any conflict of interest;
- **The situation in Syria and its effects upon surrounding countries** (*Rapporteur: Ms Theodora Bakoyannis, Greece, EPP/CD*): held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms Rajaa Altalli, Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Center for Civil Society and Democracy in Syria and member of the Syrian Women’s Advisory Board set up by the United Nations;
- **Work programme:**
 - appointed Mr Jacques Maire (France, NR) as Rapporteur on *Strengthening parliamentary dialogue with Algeria* and heard from him a declaration of absence of any conflict of interest,
 - called for candidates for opinion on *Compatibility of Sharia Law with the European Convention on Human Rights: can States Parties to the Convention be signatories of the “Cairo Declaration”?*, and took note that members may put forward their candidature until the appointment which will take place in September 2018,
 - appointed Lord George Foulkes (United Kingdom, SOC) as alternate for the Council for democratic elections of the Venice Commission, in the framework of the Assembly’s institutional representation, and decided to inform the Bureau of the Assembly accordingly,
 - took note of the concept paper of the World Forum for Democracy on *Women’s participation in public and political affairs* (Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018) and called for candidates with a view to nominations to the *ad hoc* Committee of the Bureau of the Assembly at one of its next meetings;
 - was informed by the Secretariat that, in accordance with Assembly Order 500 (1994) *Relations between the Council of Europe and the United Nations*, a meeting of the Sub-Committee on External Relations would be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in November or December 2018 (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly and the availability of funds);
- **Conference on “Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, Shared responsibility”, Dubrovnik, Croatia, 6 November 2018:** took note of the outline programme and the practical information for the Conference and appointed the following members to the *ad hoc* Sub-Committee:
 - Mr Sabir Hajiyev (Azerbaijan, SOC)
 - Mr Samad Seyidov (Azerbaijan, EC)
 - Mr Jacques Maire (France, NR)
 - Ms Nina Kasimati (Greece, UEL)
 - Ms Deborah Bergamini (Italy, EPP/CD)
 - Mr Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE)
 - Mr Tommy Sheppard (United Kingdom, NR);
- **Authorisations by the Committee:** approved the request by Mr Mogens Jensen (Denmark, SOC), Rapporteur on *The evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Jordan*, to carry out a fact-finding visit to Jordan, by the end of 2018, in the framework of the preparation of his report (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly and the availability of funds);
- **Next meetings:** decided on forthcoming meetings as follows:
 - Paris, 11 September 2018
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly’s 4th part-session, 8-12 October 2018
 - Dubrovnik, 6 November 2018 (*ad hoc* Sub-Committee to participate in the Conference on “Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, Shared responsibility”)
 - Paris, 11 December 2018.

The **Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World** (of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy), meeting in Strasbourg on 26 June 2018 with Ms Kerstin Lundgren (Sweden, ALDE) in the Chair, as regards:

- **The evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Jordan** (*Rapporteur: Mr Mogens Jensen, Denmark, SOC*): held an exchange of views with the participation of the Jordanian partner for democracy delegation;
- **The political transition in Egypt** (*Rapporteur: Lord David Blencathra, United Kingdom, EC*): was informed that at its meeting on 25 June 2018 the Bureau decided not to authorise the extension of the reference and that the Committee would therefore no longer be seized on this issue as from 30 June 2018;
- **The situation in the Middle East**: took note of an exchange of letters between Ms Aliza Lavie, Chairperson of the Israeli observer delegation, and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly; welcomed the signature by the Palestinian authority of the Protocol on the abolition of the death penalty; and was informed of the extension of the administrative detention of Ms Khalida Jarrar, member of the Palestinian partner for democracy delegation;
- **Future work** : was informed of contacts by the Chairperson and the Secretariat with the Israeli, Jordanian and Palestinian delegations with a view to organising a meeting in the region in 2018 and decided to keep all options open;
- **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, A. Salanson

cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
 Directors 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