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COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

AS/Per (2019) PV 02

14 June 2019

Standing Committee

Minutes

**of the meeting held in Paris
on 24 May 2019**

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

The meeting began at 9 a.m. with **Ms Maury Pasquier**, President of the Assembly, in the Chair.

She thanked Ms Carole Bureau-Bonnard, Vice-President of the French National Assembly, and Ms Nicole Trisse, Chair of the French delegation, for hosting the Standing Committee at the National Assembly. The priorities of the French Presidency placed emphasis on implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level and declared support for the European Social Charter, as well as numerous Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms, such as the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). Equality between women and men and action against violence against women were other strong points, particularly in the light of the #NotInMyParliament campaign.

A decision taken at the Ministerial Session in Helsinki followed the lines of Resolution 2277 (2019) and recommendation 2153 (2019) on the "Role and mission of the Assembly" adopted by the Assembly one month previously. The Assembly and the Committee of Ministers were in agreement that all the member States had to be represented in the statutory bodies and honour their financial obligations. Furthermore, the two statutory bodies agreed on drawing up a joint reaction procedure, complementing the existing mechanisms, for responding to situations in the event of a member State not honouring its statutory obligations or the standards, fundamental principles and values upheld by the Council of Europe. Such a procedure should comprise a number of well-defined steps, with a strict time frame fixed for each step by common agreement of the parties.

In the aforementioned resolution, the Assembly had also called on the Russian Federation to appoint a delegation to the Assembly and to resume obligatory payment of its contribution to the Organisation's budget. The Ministers' decision stressed that they would welcome that delegations of all member States take part in the next June part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly at which a new Secretary General would be elected. It had been decided to refer the matter to the Committee on Rules of Procedure to consider follow-up to these decisions. There was ongoing discussion between the Presidential Committee and the Bureau of the Ministers' Deputies on strengthening the Organisation's capacity to deal with violations of statutory obligations. That discussion would be pursued within the framework of the Joint Committee, which would meet during the part-session in June.

The President looked forward to collaborating with the President of the National Assembly, Mr Richard Ferrand, throughout the French Presidency and hoped to be able to welcome him at the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament on 24 and 25 October 2019.

2. WELCOME ADDRESS BY MS CAROLE BUREAU-BONNARD, VICE-PRESIDENT IN CHARGE OF INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The **Vice-President** welcomed the meeting inaugurating the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. France attached great importance to the Council of Europe and pursued the objective of promoting values, standards and requirements that were core to the European democratic identity. The President of the National Assembly would participate in the European Conference of Presidents of Parliament where he would be the keynote speaker on the theme of "Our Common European Home: the next 70 years". The present meeting was taking place against the backdrop of the elections to the European Parliament and in the context of the Russian Federation having suspended its contributions to the Council of Europe's budget two years ago. Another important aspect would be the Assembly's forthcoming election of a new Secretary General of the Council of Europe. All this highlighted the role played by the Assembly in the Organisation's future, which the French Presidency could not overlook. In addition to its political role, the reports prepared within the Assembly on a whole host of topics of national concern were instructive and made available to members of parliament when they exercised their legislative powers.

3. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH MS AMÉLIE DE MONTCHALIN, MINISTER OF STATE FOR EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, ATTACHED TO THE MINISTER FOR EUROPE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FRANCE

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The Chair welcomed Ms de Montchalin.

The Secretary of State stressed that integrity and cohesion, which could only be achieved through an enhanced dialogue between the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly, were essential to overcome the Organisation's crisis. The aim of the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, which had begun on 17 May, was to promote and strengthen the original goal of the Organisation embodied in Article 1 of the Statute. Despite the crisis, the Council of Europe remained the best example of efficient and ambitious multilateralism and offered the protection of essential rights amid rising populism and the calling into question of human rights. The Ministerial Conference in Helsinki demonstrated the Committee of Ministers' attachment to the Council of Europe's principles and values. The previous Presidency by Finland helped to enforce the proposal, put forward by the Assembly earlier, on establishing a joint procedure to react to a member State's violation of its statutory obligations. The procedure was yet to be specified. In Helsinki the Committee of Ministers also reminded that each member State had to respect its obligations, and, on the other hand, each member State's rights were to be respected. A hope was also expressed that all national delegations were going to take part in the 2019 June part session of the Assembly. Efforts to resolve situations were gradually being constructed with a move which had come from the Assembly and which the Committee of Ministers followed. It would be helpful if the Council of Europe's total resources were dedicated to protecting the essential rights of people of Europe. At the same time France remained committed to the respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The French Presidency identified three priorities which concerned preserving and consolidating the European system of human rights protection, promoting equality and living together and meeting the new challenges that face human rights.

The success of the European Court of Human Rights' system also required commitments from national jurisdictions. A conference of the Presidents of Supreme Courts was to be organised on 12 et 13 September 2019 in order to strengthen a dialogue among judges at the European level. The Presidency would highlight the European system of protection of social rights, based on the European Social Charter, and would encourage Member States to sign and ratify its Additional Protocol which provided a collective complaints mechanism. It would also propose to review the admissibility of collective complaints to make the procedure more effective. A focus would also be given to children's rights, as the year 2019 marks the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. A conference would give the opportunity to discuss the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2016-2021.

Concerning the second priority, a campaign to promote the Istanbul Convention was to be organised with the objective of increasing the number of States Parties, including beyond the European continent. The celebration of the 25th anniversary of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance in Paris on 26 and 27 September would be a time to take stock of progress made as well as consider new challenges related to new technologies and hate speech to be tackled. An Observatory for History Teaching, based on the network of academic circles and Education Ministers, was to be set up to foster the teaching of history to create a shared belonging. This project will be discussed at a conference on the teaching of history, gathering in particular Education Ministers. During the French Presidency, Eurimages, currently headed by Catherine Trautmann, would celebrate its 30th anniversary.

In the framework of its third priority, France would move forward a project for a convention on artificial intelligence and human rights. The project would be discussed at a Conference of Justice Ministers of the Council of Europe on 14 and 15 October. As a part of the overall protection of users, the Presidency encouraged work in the area of personal data protection and action against cybercrime. Also, France would highlight the connection between democracy and information at the Word Forum for Democracy to be held from 6 to 8 November and which would provide an opportunity to air the issues linked to reliable and high-quality information, and also the protection of journalists and the defence of freedom of expression and the media. Finally, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) the global fight against corruption would be emphasised with a particular focus on co-operation between national authorities.

In response to **Mr Kox** who enquired why the Committee of Ministers' position, endorsed by the declarations of Helsinki, was to grant more power to the Assembly, **the Secretary of State** said that, in order to be able to swiftly react to violations of international law the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers had to coordinate their activities. The work was to be undertaken in the coming months to outline the new joint procedure which had to be both efficient and deterrent.

Ms Schou underlined that the Ministerial Conference in Helsinki welcomed the participation of all national delegations to the Assembly in the June part-session. How would the French Presidency help this process? **The Secretary of State** said France and Germany continued to have regular talks with Mr Putin in the context of the Normandy contact group. Recent provocations by the Russian Federation were discussed during the last phone call between the three leaders. Some steps had already been taken by the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers. In the following days the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs would meet to consider the rules on submitting of credentials by national delegations.

Mr Ariev welcomed the Secretary of the State's support of Ukraine's territorial integrity and regretted that the Russian Federation did not show any sign of willingness to de-escalate the tensions and, on the contrary, showed bad will in deciding to distribute Russian passports in Donbass. If the delegation of the Russian Federation were to take up their activities in the Assembly without precondition, how would the Council of Europe avoid a subsequent crisis? **The Secretary of State** reminded that the Council of Europe had no competence to assess border disputes. That being said, membership of the Council of Europe came together with moral and financial obligations to respect the Organisation's values. During her visit to Ukraine the Secretary of State discussed how the existing political talks formats could help to protect the rights of Ukrainian citizens. Also, the visit of the UN Commissioner on Human Rights and of UN experts to the Crimea and Donbass was discussed with Mr Putin as well as the situation of Ukrainian prisoners: sailors and others. A balanced approach to resolving the situation implied moves by the Assembly, the Committee of Ministers and national delegations.

In response to **Lord Foulkes** who asked if the discussion in Helsinki would have been the same if Russia occupied a part of Norway, Finland or France, **the Secretary of State** said she would avoid discussing political fictions. The Council of Europe had no power to solve situations related to territorial integrity and sovereignty. Its primary objective was to give protection to European citizens and this objective could be endangered if people of one country were deprived of protection because of an action by its government. It would also create a dangerous precedent for future if a country which breached international law would simply withdraw from an organisation which monitored it. In Helsinki only 6 countries – Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine and three Baltic States – expressed a clear desire to see Russia make a decisive move. Other member States were in favour of giving a chance to all national delegations in the Assembly to work together.

Mr Kiral enquired if a coordinated position among international organisations such as the OSCE and others, which defended the existing order, could be put in place. **The Secretary of State** welcomed the ambitious proposal on which the next Presidency could work in more detail. In her exchange with the new President of the European Court of Human Rights she made a similar proposal to achieve a deeper coherence between global and regional human rights settings.

To **Sir Roger Gale** who underlined the importance of freedom of journalists and asked to comment on the case of three journalists who published leaked military documents on the use of French-made weapons in Yemen and were to face a hearing in France's domestic intelligence agency over compromising national defence, **the Secretary of State** reminded that the case was not in relation with the French Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. Confidential defence documents had been made public putting human life at risk. France would make sure that the current procedure complied with the Constitution.

Mr Kitev asked if North Macedonia, which had reached a compromise on the name with Greece and had made progress in some key reforms, could count on France's support in the process of joining the European Union. **The Secretary of State** said it would be more appropriate to discuss the European Union accession in another forum. She welcomed efforts of politicians, policy-makers and citizens which had led to solving a decade-lasting conflict. She welcomed the full participation of North Macedonia in the Council of Europe and considered that all territories on the European continent had to benefit from European values.

To **Mr Kiliç** who enquired why manifestations by PKK, which had been recognised as a terrorist organisation in France, were still authorised in front of the Council of Europe, **the Secretary of State** reminded that freedom of assembly was a constitutional right which had to be respected if the assembly was not qualified as a terrorist group. The matter of the qualification was the competence of the law enforcement authorities in Strasbourg.

In response to **Ms Mikko** who enquired if the Assembly had made a mistake by depriving the delegation of Russia of the right to vote and if the Russian Federation also had committed a mistake by leaving the Assembly and stop paying its contributions to the budget of the Council of Europe, **the Secretary of State** said she was not in a position to qualify what was a mistake. The issue at stake was to make sure that the Organisation's Statute and people's rights were respected. The current situation was not beneficial either for Ukraine or for other States or the Organisation itself. Membership of the Organisation came with the obligations to participate, to pay contributions and to implement the Organisation's decisions. The obligations had to be

respected by all delegations and the joint procedure to be established had to be designed to promptly sanction the non-compliance with these obligations before the situation became a frozen conflict.

4. VERIFICATION OF NEW CREDENTIALS

Doc. 14898

The Standing Committee **ratified** the credentials of the new members and substitutes, as set out in document Doc. 14898.

5. CHANGES IN THE MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEES

Commissions (2019) 05
+ Add. 1

The Standing Committee **ratified** the changes in the membership of Assembly committees, as set out in document Commissions (2019) 05 + Add. 1.

6. AGENDA

AS/Per (2019) OJ 02 rev3

The revised draft agenda was **adopted**.

7. THIRD PART-SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY (24-28 JUNE 2019)

AS/Bur (2019) 35

Pursuant to Rule 27.4 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, the Standing Committee **took note** of the draft agenda for the third part-session of 2019.

8. REFERENCE TO COMMITTEES

AS/Bur (2019) 41

The Standing Committee **ratified** the references and transmissions to committees, as set out in Appendix I.

9. OBSERVATION OF ELECTIONS

- a. Observation of the presidential election in Ukraine
(31 March and 21 April 2019)
*Rapporteur of the Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau:
Ms Angela Smith (United Kingdom, SOC)*

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In the absence of the Chair of the ad hoc committee, the report was presented by **Mr Schennach**, who commended the peaceful holding of the election against the backdrop of the ongoing military conflict. The first round had been contested by 39 candidates, some of whom had been "technical" candidates. Given the amount of the 90 000 EUR deposit required, which was not returned to unsuccessful candidates, there were questions as to the sources of their funding. Because of the high number of candidates, the ballot paper had been 90 cm long. Criticisms included pressure on journalists and private media promoting their owners' interests. Furthermore, many voters had not been registered on the electoral roll for the first round, although the situation had been rectified prior to the second round, with the registration of 300 000 additional voters. Some 300 000 people had crossed the contact line in order to participate in the election, despite the considerable logistical difficulties. The election result had been unequivocal and the Ukrainian Parliament was congratulated on organising the inauguration as soon as it had been announced. The Monitoring Committee's co-rapporteur had been present during both rounds. With regard to the organisation of balloting, it was regrettable that numerous polling stations had not been accessible to disabled people. While Mr Zelenskiy had been able to nominate members of electoral commissions following an appeal launched on social networks, he had not sent observers. The work carried out by women in the exemplary running of the polling stations was to be commended.

Ms Schou commended the Ukrainian people for holding a free and democratic election and regretted that it had not been possible to run the election in Crimea after its illegal annexation by Russia and the parts of Donbass that were under Russian Federation control. In the current media context blighted by fake news it was important to treat political opponents with respect in order to establish acceptable limits for political debate. Mr Zelenskiy was expected to back anti-corruption measures, including for the functioning of the High Anti-Corruption Court.

Mr Grass, who had participated in the observation of the election within the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly delegation, had been astonished by the use of transparent ballot boxes, as in Moldova and Russia, which made it possible to see who a voter had chosen if they had not folded their ballot paper. Furthermore, the system of voting from home should be replaced by postal voting. He also praised the exemplary management of polling stations, mostly by women.

Mr Vallini thought that listing all the candidates on a single ballot paper was a pragmatic and comprehensible course of action and wished that the French authorities would draw inspiration from this example.

Mr Schennach pointed out that transparent ballot boxes and voting from home were common practices in many countries. The problem of ballot papers being visible could be overcome by using envelopes. In Ukraine the demand for voting at home had not been as high as it might have been, given the difficulties of disabled access to polling stations. He was pleased to see that 60% of voters had turned out for the election notwithstanding the situation in the country.

Mr Kiral stressed that transparent ballot boxes had been introduced to prevent the stuffing of ballot boxes. In Ukraine it was illegal to show a filled-in ballot paper, and the newly elected president had been fined for doing so in public.

The Standing Committee **took note** of the report.

- b. Observation of the presidential election in North Macedonia
(21 April and 5 May 2019)

AS/Bur/NM (2019) 02

*Rapporteur of the Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau:
Ms Marie-Christine Dalloz (France, EPP/CD)*

The Chair of the ad hoc committee praised the constructive cooperation within the international delegation observing the elections and regretted that the Monitoring Committee's co-rapporteurs had not participated in the mission. Although the ballot was assessed as having allowed a free choice, a number of recurrent issues with the electoral process remained. A reform of the electoral code had to secure citizens' acceptance of and active participation in the election of the head of State, whatever their ethnic origin. There was a gulf between the voting tendencies of Macedonian and Albanian voters. Analysis of the statistical data of the six Albanian-speaking municipalities showed that the candidate backed by the SDSM/DUI coalition, Mr Pendarivski, scored over 90%, while the candidate backed by the VMPO-DPMNE, Ms Siljanovska-Davkova, obtained no votes at all in many polling stations. In its talks with the country's authorities the Monitoring Committee should emphasise the need for an inclusive society. The report contained a number of previously made recommendations, which were still relevant now, and some new recommendations which might be implemented with the support of the Assembly and the Venice Commission.

Mr Kitev welcomed the report which described, in objective terms, the electoral authorities' success in organising a free ballot. By electing a candidate backed by the pro-government coalition, the people had affirmed the country's Euro-Atlantic policy. The signature of the agreement with Greece had put an end to a conflict that had dragged on for 28 years. The agreement signed between North Macedonia and Bulgaria had sent a positive signal to all western Balkans countries and contributed to regional stability and cooperation. Reforms were under way in the fields of action against corruption and organised crime, the judicial system, the functioning of the security services and the civil service and were intended to forge a solid basis for the rule of law. These efforts could result in the closure of the post-monitoring procedure and the opening of negotiations with the European Union.

According to **Mr Schennach**, the "colourful revolution" of 2016 had narrowed the gap between young people belonging to the two ethnic communities. It was premature to speak of closing the post-monitoring procedure.

The Chair of the ad hoc committee agreed that it would be premature to close the procedure even though the country was on the right track. A number of issues remained, including the functioning of the anti-corruption commission, the as of yet undefined role of the Chamber of Audit regarding the funding of electoral campaigns, the lack of a population census since 2002. She did not share the view of the previous speaker regarding closer links between the two communities and thought that, on the contrary, these communities continued to lead separate lives, which could pose a problem in the future.

The Standing Committee **took note** of the report.

10. POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND DEMOCRACY

Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco

Rapporteur of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy:
Mr Bogdan Klich (Poland, EPP/CD)

[Doc. 14659](#)

and amendments

Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (for opinion):
Mr André Vallini (France, SOC)

[Doc. 14853](#)

Rapporteur of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination (for opinion):
Ms Edite Estrela (Portugal, SOC)

[Doc. 14869](#)

The rapporteur pointed out that this was the third evaluation of the partnership since the Parliament of Morocco had been granted partnership for democracy status in 2011. When lodging its official request, the Parliament of Morocco had declared that it shared the same values as those upheld by the Council of Europe and entered into a set of political undertakings. The country had achieved real progress in implementing those undertakings as regards the passing of the implementing laws provided for in the 2011 Constitution. The Rif movement had provided an opportunity to evaluate the functioning of the judicial services and institutions tasked with protecting human rights and political rights. While the report did not cover Western Sahara, this topic had been mentioned in connection with the statements and opinions of the United Nations Secretary General and the launch of negotiations between the parties concerned, notably Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania and the Polisario Front. It was important to ensure respect for human rights in Western Sahara. Where Morocco's relationship with the European Union was concerned, the association agreement proposed new preferential tariffs and there was a new agreement extending the geographical scope of measures to liberalise fishing. The Council of Europe should acknowledge and appreciate the reforms achieved. Since being launched in 2011, they had been carried out in a context marked by stability. However, threats to stability must not serve as a pretext to restrict freedoms. The continuation of the neighbourhood partnership with Morocco for the period 2018-2021 was welcomed with satisfaction. The Assembly should continue to review implementation of reforms and carry out a new evaluation of partnership in due course.

The rapporteur for opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights shared the rapporteur's assessment that Morocco had successfully pursued reforms aimed at strengthening democratic governance since 2011. The appointment of Amina Bouyach, former president of the Moroccan Organisation for Human Rights, to the presidency of the Moroccan National Human Rights Council, and Bachir Rachid, former member of Transparency International, to the chair of the ethics and good governance committee of the General Confederation of Moroccan Enterprises, testified to that progress. Before any new evaluation of the partnership, the Moroccan authorities should be urged to undertake new reforms to establish a real, democratic rule of law. Regarding the human rights situation, most of the concerns expressed by the Assembly in 2013 and 2015 were still to be addressed, and this related to the proceedings brought against 53 leaders of the Rif movement which were considered to be unfair. Consequently, the committee was proposing some amendments to the draft resolution in order to further strengthen it and encourage the authorities to guarantee the effective exercise of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the 2011 Constitution. The authorities were also urged to completely abolish the death penalty, even though a *de facto* moratorium had been in place since 1993.

The rapporteur for opinion of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination agreed with the review of the partnership. Since 2015, remarkable progress had been achieved in gender equality. The opinion also identified aspects on which more could be done towards attaining the aim of parity enshrined in the 2011 Constitution. One of these was the representation of women in the political sphere. Thanks to positive measures 60 women had been elected to parliament in the single nationwide constituency. However, those women would be replaced in the next election owing to a rule whereby persons elected in the single constituency could not stand as candidates in the same constituency in the next elections. Another aspect related to the law on violence against women, passed in February 2018. The watering down of the original draft, which did not include marital rape, had been criticised by experts. It would be advisable to launch discussion taking account of the opinion of civil society and the experience of implementing the Istanbul Convention. Consenting sexual relations between adults of the same sex still constituted a criminal offence. Morocco could follow the example of Jordan, where the criminalisation of homosexual relations had been repealed in 1951. The report indicated the exemplary nature of policies on migration and migrant integration but also emphasised the growing number of incidents of intolerance towards foreigners, particularly from sub-Saharan Africa.

Mr Kox pointed out that the Moroccan Parliament had become the Assembly's first partner for democracy, and the Unified European Left Group was in favour of pursuing the partnership. Even though the progress

made was undeniable, there were also a great many developments that were a source of concern, notably the Rif events and Western Sahara for which the human rights situation should be the focus of separate reports or be monitored on a permanent basis.

Mr Seyidov emphasised that the positive progress, which was the aim of the partnership, set a good example for all countries wishing to draw closer to the Council of Europe. In 2019, the country had become a "partner for local democracy" of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. While he agreed with Mr Kox on the necessity of monitoring, that monitoring should be carried out with caution and take due account of the regional context and specific characteristics; otherwise it might prove counterproductive. Although, in her question to the Committee of Ministers, Ms De Sutter spoke of the "illegal occupation" and "annexation of Western Sahara by Morocco", Morocco had never been called an "occupier" in United Nations documents.

For **Mr Schennach** the occupation was a fact that nonetheless did not fall within the scope of the report before the Committee. There should be respect for human rights even in occupied territories. He welcomed the active participation of women in Moroccan political life, referring to the example of Ms Fatima-Zahra Mansouri, the former mayor of Marrakech who had received the Young Arab Leaders Award. Despite the progress noted, there were still cases of people immolating themselves by fire because of poverty.

Sir Roger Gale stressed that, as chair of the trustees of a charity with activities in Morocco, he had been in a position to follow the developments of recent years, which he found impressive. The term "occupation" had to be used with caution. It was astonishing that those who were ready to defend the annexation of Crimea by Russia were opposed to Morocco's legitimate administration of Western Sahara. Mr Klich might prepare an objective report on the situation in Western Sahara.

Mr Amraoui reiterated that the partnership was a voluntary step by the Parliament of Morocco, which was a country that had a stabilising influence in the region. With regard to the conflicts around the southern provinces, the United Nations had been requested to settle the dispute. None of the official documents issued by that organisation had ever spoken of "occupation". This term should be used with caution within the Parliamentary Assembly. Where respect for human rights in that part of Morocco was concerned, all the United Nations resolutions welcomed the role played by the Moroccan National Human Rights Council. The socio-economic protests that had taken place in the northern province were no different from those that took place all over the world. A total of 620 demonstrations held in the course of 6 months had remained peaceful, which was proof that the freedom to demonstrate truly existed. Events had then taken a radical turn and law enforcement officers had been attacked. The decisions on the cases relating to the demonstrations were taken by the prosecutor's office, which was independent of the Minister of Justice. The Parliament of Morocco was satisfied with the partnership and wished to broaden it to serve mutual interests.

The rapporteur agreed with Mr Kox on the need for monitoring, for which the decision would come from the competent organs of the Assembly. With regard to the situation in the Rif, the Moroccan authorities were urged to pay close attention to the functioning of the justice system in the light of the separation of functions mentioned by the previous speaker. The report did not seek to debate the status of Western Sahara but expressed concern over the human rights situation in that region.

Amendments 9 and 10 were adopted unanimously pursuant to Rule 34.11 of the Rules of Procedure.

Amendments 1 to 7 were adopted unanimously.

Amendment 8, sub-amended by **Ms Ævarsdóttir**, was adopted unanimously.

The Committee **adopted** the draft resolution unanimously [Resolution 2282 (2019)].

11. SOCIAL AFFAIRS, HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- a. Addressing the health needs of adolescents in Europe

Doc. 14829

and amendments

*Rapporteur of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development:
Baroness Doreen Massey (United Kingdom, SOC)*

The rapporteur said the report targeted the way of helping adolescents to cope with several circumstances they may face during adolescence, and which required services in drugs, sexual health and mental health. Research showed that most mental health problems began before the age of 25 and were most common between the ages of 11 and 18. Mental health problems may be more or less common, acute or long lasting and may vary in severity. Concerning sexual health, in order for adolescents to enjoy respectful and satisfying

relationships and protect themselves from unplanned pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, a combination of accurate information and advice was required. The reasons for early sexual activity and lack of protection were varied. However, there were improvements in awareness. For instance, the United Kingdom Teenage Pregnancy Strategy combined efforts from communities, young people, schools and services with focus on reducing the high rates of teenage conception. Even though obesity was a relatively new phenomenon, it had already become global and was pointed to as the most serious public health challenge of the 21st century. Targeted efforts were needed to break the cycle of obesity including awareness policies, actions by departments and communities and parental influence. In order to attain overall objectives socio-economic, political and cultural factors had to be taken into account. Services had to be made appropriate for adolescents instead of imitating adult services. This could be achieved by involving adolescents in designing and developing interventions. There was a need for policies to regulate food and drinks consumption. Investing in adolescent health was to invest in the future of societies and to contribute toward Goal 3 of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

The Chair of the committee Mr Schennach welcomed the report, adopted unanimously by the committee, and stressed the importance of guaranteeing that adolescents had access to sexual health services.

In the view of **Mr Kiliç** the debate on the future of our societies had to be geared to fighting obesity. On the one hand, this entailed changing individual eating habits, such as the consumption of high-sugar foods available in schools, which had harmful long-term effects, and on the other hand, obesity was linked to the issue of sustainable development, crop production and food quantity. This question should be examined in a separate report.

The rapporteur agreed on the need to fight obesity and cited the example of a study carried out in Birmingham, in the Midlands region of England, which showed that for every pound spent on improving dietary habits, 23 pounds were recovered in terms of health benefits.

The Committee **adopted** the draft resolution unanimously [Resolution 2284 (2019)].

b. Sustainable urban development fostering social inclusion

[Doc. 14887](#)

*Rapporteur of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development:
Ms Sybille Benning (Germany, EPP/CD)*

The rapporteur pointed out that Sustainable development goal 11 was to make cities and human settlements resilient and sustainable. An environment allowing democratic participation was conducive to sustainable development and the rule of law. To create and build sustainable cities, citizen participation at municipal level was required: "think global, act local". Today, 75% of Europe's population lived in cities that were confronted with the consequences of climate change, exacerbated by social divisions and problems linked to migration. It was important, therefore, to forge links between cities and the outlying areas, with a view to taking pressure off the city. The rapporteur's home city of Münster had won the national urban development award. Back in 2015 the city had created a department for sustainable development which produced expert appraisals of all the municipality's decisions. Decision-making was now participative, involving politicians, the administration and local citizens. Münster was a bike-friendly city: there were 100 000 bikes for 321 000 habitants. The commonly encountered challenge of social housing shortages was alleviated by granting building permits on condition that 30% of the dwellings delivered would be social housing. Other cities had introduced innovative solutions to guarantee social equity. In Iceland, *Betri Reykjavík* was an on-line participatory social network enabling citizens to voice, debate and prioritise ideas to improve their city. The *Human Rights Cities* label had been introduced by a UN resolution. During the German presidency of the Council of the European Union, a charter for sustainable urban development was to be adopted. Parliaments were invited to act by framing policies and strategies geared to implementing sustainable development goals, as well as promoting governance at multiple levels. The public sector should take an active role in the strategic planning of cities. A call for concepts would make it possible to compare different strategic visions. Given what was at stake, sustainable urban development was quite definitely an issue to be reflected on in the Parliamentary Assembly.

For the **Chair of the committee**, Mr Schennach, the theme of the report was one that brought together people of different political leanings. Social housing was a crucial issue and public policies were needed to combat property speculation. The *Housing for all* initiative was being introduced in many European cities. It was important to cater for the needs of outlying areas in terms of transport but also in terms of health and education. The city of Vienna would shortly follow Münster's lead by creating a department of sustainable development.

Ms Brynjólfssdóttir welcomed the mention of the initiative of the city of Reykjavik, which had yielded good results.

The rapporteur hoped that more work would be done at national level.

The Committee **adopted** the draft resolution unanimously [Resolution 2285 (2019)].

c. Air pollution: a challenge for public health in Europe

Doc. 14888

*Rapporteur of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development:
Mr Serhii Kiral (Ukraine, EC)*

The rapporteur thought that, as a complement to the topics previously discussed, it was important to focus on the quality of air in urban areas as, in Europe, one person in ten now lived in an urban environment with a critical level of air pollution. There was a range of legal reference instruments for European countries including the 1979 Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution and its protocols, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants of 2001 and European Union directives. Thanks to EU legislation, there had been a net reduction in air pollution over the last five years. The first Global Conference on Air Pollution and Health organised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2018 had flagged up Europe's exporting of pollution to other countries around the world. The limits for exposure to particulate matter, the main source of pollution, whose impact on health should be studied more closely, varied considerably between the European Union and the WHO. If the WHO limits were applied, 85% of Europe's population would be affected by exposure above those limits. Children were particularly at risk owing to their small size. Air pollution caused more deaths today than smoking. Cities were organising their efforts to introduce strategies at the level of built-up areas. The resolution urged the member States to step up their cooperation with the European Environment Agency, which monitored air pollution levels but also participated in devising public policies at European Union level. The member States were urged to take action within their respective parliaments. The rapporteur had launched a project to monitor air pollution levels in partnership with the Swedish embassy in Ukraine.

Ms Trisse found the statistics alarming and hoped that the report would be read by the new European Parliament. Mobilisation on a European scale was required.

Ms Brynjólfssdóttir wished to know more about the solutions available to municipalities.

Mr Kiliç thought that the solution also entailed an element of self-criticism in view of the practice of selling polluting European cars in low-income countries. Pollution knew no frontiers. It was important to generate clean energy without regard for profit while maintaining solidarity with countries that did not have the necessary means.

Ms Schou voiced doubts as to the link between air pollution and the Council of Europe's fundamental values and wondered if other organisations might not be better placed to deal with this problem. Did a universal definition of clean air exist?

Mr Kox understood the doubts expressed by the previous speaker. However, the Council of Europe's key instruments - the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter - stipulated respect by the States for the right to life and the introduction of good-quality health services respectively. The figures in the report pointed to the tangible consequences of a situation for which humankind and its lifestyle bore the responsibility. People were unequally affected, depending on their age, place of work and income. Life expectancy for vulnerable people in the Netherlands was seven years lower than that of those who were better off. So this was very much an issue linked to human rights.

Ms Brynjólfssdóttir agreed with Mr Kox and added that the European Social Charter mentioned health over 300 times.

The chair of the committee, Mr Schennach, pointed out that the topic was also considered from the viewpoint of children's rights. The European Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights guaranteed the right to healthy working conditions. In the future the committee would be producing a report on emissions from diesel vehicles. While the problem was a worldwide one, immediate action had to come from municipalities, which had the power to take concrete measures by banning vehicles in the proximity of schools.

The rapporteur thanked those who had contributed to the debate. Taking their cue from the European directive obliging the States to provide for a national action plan on air pollution, national parliaments could impose a similar approach on municipalities and set up environment funds enabling the municipalities to fund these schemes. In addition, if countries that were not members of the European Union joined the European Environment Agency, standards could be harmonised throughout Europe. The development of clean energy in developing countries could form part of the projects funded by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development or the European Investment Bank. In Ukraine, such projects were also funded by individual countries such as Denmark. Questioning the link between air and human rights was understandable. However, the right to breathe clean air had been recognised as a human right, and the Parliamentary Assembly had means

of driving forward this cause which went beyond borders, by encouraging member States to sign up to the European Environment Agency and by making governments account for their actions in this area. Air pollution was also an aspect of climate change and widely debated within the Assembly.

The Committee **adopted** the draft resolution unanimously [Resolution 2286 (2019)].

12. CULTURE, SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND MEDIA

Education and culture: new partnerships to recognise personal development and competences

*Rapporteur of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media:
Mr Mogens Jensen (Denmark, SOC)*

Doc. 14886

In the absence of the rapporteur, **Lord Foulkes** presented a report with three key recommendations with a view to adding to school curricula the learning of arts and creativity and to remedying a segregation of education and culture which often existed at the institutional level, whether it be at the level of the European Commission or national ministries. The governments of member States should be encouraged to embed cultural and creative competences within their formal education system. They were also encouraged to support sustainable, long-term partnerships between schools, employers, creative industries and cultural institutions in order to give young people the confidence and capabilities they would need in a world and economy that depended on innovation. Finally, the Council of Europe, together with the European Commission and in collaboration with professional associations should develop a Europe-wide tool – an award or a certificate – for recognising the competences developed by learning whilst participating in arts culture and creative activities. This would cover a participation in formal and non-formal activities such as membership of a youth theatre group, choir, band or orchestra, a writers or readers group, a museum or art gallery club, etc. Several models useful within particular local contexts existed already which, however, were non-suitable for adoption across Europe. Given current initiatives in the field of education and culture developed at the European Union level and bearing in mind the financial constraints faced by the Council of Europe, the key recommendations of the resolution were directed at the European Union institutions. Finally, the “new partnership” referred to in the title, had to be understood as partnership between schools and communities and private institutions, among international institutions, and between the various international institutions and professional bodies.

The Committee **adopted** the draft resolution unanimously [Resolution 2283 (2019)].

13. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

14. NEXT MEETING

The Standing Committee **decided** to hold its next meeting in Tbilisi (Georgia) on Friday 29 November 2019.

The meeting **rose** at 1.30 pm.

APPENDIX I

Decisions on documents tabled for references to committees

A. REFERENCES AND TRANSMISSIONS TO COMMITTEES

- [Doc. 14864](#), Motion for a resolution, *Gender aspects and human rights implications of pornography: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination for report;*
- [Doc. 14873](#), Motion for a resolution, *Persecution of Christians worldwide – how to tackle the issue: transmission to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy for information.*

B. REQUEST FOR AN EXTENSION OF REFERENCE

- [Doc. 14380](#), Motion for a resolution, *Defining guidelines for international NGOs (new title: Rights and obligations of NGOs assisting refugees and migrants in Europe)* (Reference 4331 of 10 October 2017 (extended on 15 March 2018)) – validity: 10 October 2019: extension until 30 April 2020.

APPENDIX II

List of participants / Liste des participants

President of the Parliamentary Assembly / Présidente de l'Assemblée parlementaire

Mme Liliane MAURY PASQUIER Switzerland / Suisse

Chairpersons of Political Groups / Présidents des groupes politiques

Mr Aleksander POCIEJ	Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)
Mr Mart van DE VEN	Replacing the Chairperson of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) / En remplacement du Président de l'Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe (ADLE)
Mr Ian LIDDELL-GRAINGER	Group of the European Conservatives (EC) / Groupe des conservateurs européens (CE)
Mr Tiny KOX	Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) / Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)
Mr Aleksandar ŠEŠELJ	Vice-Chairperson of the Free Democrats Group (FDG) Vice-président du Groupe des démocrates libres (GDL)

Vice-Presidents of the Assembly / Vice-président·e·s de l'Assemblée

Sir Roger GALE	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
Mme Nicole TRISSE	France
Mr Samad SEYIDOV	Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan
Mr Andreas NICK	Germany / Allemagne
Ms Boriana ÅBERG	Sweden / Suède
Ms Rósa Björk BRYNJÓLFSDÓTTIR	Iceland / Islande
Mr Akif Çağatay KILIÇ	Turkey / Turquie
Ms Inese LIBINA-EGNERE	Latvia / Lettonie
Ms Sania PUTICA	Croatia / Croatie

Chairpersons of National Delegations / Président-e-s de délégations nationales

Mr Ruben RUBINYAN	Armenia / Arménie
Mr Samad SEYIDOV	Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan
Ms Sanja PUTICA	Croatia / Croatie
Ms Miroslava NEMCOVA	Czech Republic / République tchèque
Ms Marianne MIKKO	Estonia / Estonie
Ms Rósa Björk BRYNJÓLFSDÓTTIR	Iceland / Islande
Ms Sirkka-Liisa ANTILLA	Finland / Finlande
Mme Nicole TRISSE	France
Mr Andreas NICK	Germany / Allemagne
Mr Algirdas BUTKEVICIUS	Lithuania / Lituanie
M. Gusty GRAAS	Luxembourg
Mr Mart van de VEN	Netherlands / Pays-Bas
Mr Betian KITEV	North Macedonia / Macédoine du Nord
Ms Ingrid SCHOU	Norway / Norvège
Mr Andrej ŠIRCELJ	Slovenia / Slovénie
Ms Boriana ÅBERG	Sweden / Suède
Mr Akif Çağatay KILIÇ	Turkey / Turquie
Mr Volodymyr ARIEV	Ukraine
Sir Roger GALE	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni

Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights /

Présidente de la Commission des questions juridiques et des droits de l'homme

Ms Thorhildur Sunna ÆVARSDOTTIR Iceland / Islande

Chairperson of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development /

Président de la Commission des questions sociales, de la santé et du développement durable

President de la Commission des questions sociales, de l'emploi et de l'industrie
Mr Stefan SCHENNACH Austria / Autriche

Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) / Commission pour le respect des obligations et engagements des États membres du Conseil de l'Europe (Commission de suivi)
Sir Roger GALE
United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni

Other members of the Assembly / autres membres de l'Assemblée

M. Allal AMRAOUI	Chairperson House of Representatives Morocco / Président Chambre des Représentants Maroc
Mme Aziza CHAGAF	House of Representatives Morocco / Chambre des Représentants Maroc
Mme Nicole DURANTON	France
Lord George FOULKES	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
M. Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ	Switzerland / Suisse
M. Abdelali HAMIDINE	House of Councillors Morocco / Chambre des Conseillers Maroc
Mme Lydia MUTSCH	Luxembourg

Rapporteurs (not members of the Standing Committee / non-membres de la Commission permanente)

Ms Sybille BENNING	Germany / Allemagne
Mme Marie-Christine DALLOZ	France
Ms Edite ESTRELA	Portugal
Mr Serhii KIRAL	Ukraine
Mr Bogdan KLICH	Poland / Pologne
Baroness Doreen MASSEY	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
M. André VALLINI	France

Invited personalities / Personnalités invitées

Mme Carole BUREAU-BONNARD	Vice-president in charge of international activities of the French National Assembly / Vice-présidente chargée des activités internationales de l'Assemblée nationale, France
Mme Amélie DE MONTCHALIN	Minister of State for European Affairs, attached to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, France / Secrétaire d'État auprès du ministre de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères, chargée des Affaires européennes, France

Secretaries of National Delegations and Partners for Democracy /

Secrétaire de délégations nationales et de partenaires pour la démocratie

Mr Emin MAMMADOV	Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan
Ms Sonja LANGENHAECK	Belgium / Belgique
Ms Martina PETEK-STUPAR	Croatia / Croatie
Ms Veronika KRUPOVÁ	Czech Republic / République tchèque
Ms Eva VERBIAS	Estonia / Estonie
Ms Maria FAGERHOLM	Finland / Finlande
M. Laurent SAUNIER	National Assembly / Assemblée nationale, France
M. Xavier DUPRIEZ	French Senate / Sénat français
Mr Michael HILGER	Germany / Allemagne
Ms Bylgja ÁRNADÓTTIR	Iceland / Islande
Mr Federico CASELLI	Italy / Italie
Mr Martins OLEKSS	Latvia / Lettonie
Ms Femmy DE JONG	Netherlands / Pays-Bas
Ms Marija STEFANOVA	North Macedonia / Macédoine du Nord
Ms Ingrid HØDNEBØ	Norway / Norvège
Mr Bartosz BEGOWSKI	Poland / Pologne
Ms Alja ŠKIBIN	Slovenia / Slovénie
Ms Petra SJÖSTRÖM	Sweden / Suède
M. Daniel ZEHNDER	Switzerland / Suisse
Mr Iskender Kemal OKYAY	Turkey / Turquie
Mr Nicholas WRIGHT	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni

M. Youssef AIT ZEDDIB	Morocco / Maroc
M. Saad GHAZI	Morocco / Maroc

Secretaries of Political Groups / Secrétaires des Groupes politiques

Ms Denise O'HARA	EPP/CD / PPE/DC
Ms Francesca ARBOGAST	SOC
Ms Maria BIGDAY	ALDE / ADLE
Mr Tom VAN DIJCK	EC / CE
Ms Anna KOLOTOVA	UEL / GUE
Ms Jelena SUDIMAC	FDG / GDL

Council of Europe / Conseil de l'Europe

Mr Bjorn BERGE	Secretary to the Committee of Ministers / Secrétaire du Comité des Ministres
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Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly / Secrétariat de l'Assemblée Parlementaire

Mr Wojciech SAWICKI	Secretary General / Secrétaire Général
Ms Marja RUOTANEN	Director of Committees Directorate / Directrice de la Direction des commissions
Mr Horst SCHADE	Director of General Services / Directeur des Services Généraux
Mr Mark NEVILLE	Head of the Private Office / Chef de Cabinet
Mr Alfred SIXTO	Head of the Table Office / Chef du Service de la Séance
Ms Micaela CATALANO	Head of the Communication Division / Chef de la Division de la communication
Mme Kateryna GAYEVSKA	Secretary of the Standing Committee and the Bureau / Secrétaire de la Commission permanente et du Bureau
Mme Isild HEURTIN	Head of the Secretariat of the Bureau / Chef du Secrétariat du Bureau
Ms Sally-Ann HONEYMAN	Specialised Administrative Assistant, Table Office / Assistante administrative spécialisée du Service de la Séance
Mme Martine MEYER	Assistant of the Standing Committee / Assistante de la Commission permanente
Mme Annick SCHNEIDER	Assistant to the Secretary General / Assistant to the Bureau Assistante du Secrétaire Général / Assistante du Bureau
Mme Aurélie HAUG	Assistant to Ms RUOTANEN / Assistante de Mme RUOTANEN

Other participants / Autres participants

Mr Amal BELCAID	Director of External Relations and Co-operation, House of Representatives, Morocco / Directeur des Relations Extérieures et de la Coopération, Chambre des Représentants, Maroc
Ms Maryem NASSIF	Vice-Consul General, in charge of multilateral political affairs, Morocco / Vice-Consul Général, chargée des affaires politiques multilatérales, Maroc