

## TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

### Secretariat of the Assembly

#### Synopsis

1 December 2008

**The Bureau of the Assembly**, meeting on Thursday, 27 November 2008 in Madrid with Mr Lluís Maria de Puig, President of the Assembly, in the Chair, as regards:

- ***Follow-up given to Resolution 1633 (2008) on “The consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia”***: took note of a memorandum prepared by the President regarding the Presidential Committee’s visit to Georgia and decided to declassify it;
- ***Standing Committee (Madrid, 28 November 2008)***:
  - i. Request for a current affairs debate*:
    - a. “The world financial crisis: the economic collapse of Iceland” (submitted by the Icelandic parliamentary delegation): decided to recommend to the Standing Committee to hold a current affairs debate on this subject and appointed Mr Sigfusson (Iceland, UEL) to introduce the debate;
    - ii. Draft agenda*: took note of the updated draft agenda;
  - ***2009 First part-Session of the Assembly (26-30 January 2009)***: drew up a draft agenda;
  - ***References and transmissions to committees*** : see Appendix I;
  - ***Observation of elections*** :
    - i. Presidential election in Azerbaijan (15 October 2008)*: approved the report of the ad hoc committee which had observed this election (Rapporteur: Mr Herkel, Estonia, EPP/CD);
    - ii. Parliamentary elections in Ukraine (date to be confirmed)*: was informed by the President that President Yuschenko had announced that these elections would be held in 2009;
- ***State of Human Rights in Europe: Proposal for the theme for the 2009 debate***: decided to return to this question at its next meeting;

- **Communications:** took note of the communications of the President, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, as well as the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly;

- **Opinion and proposals of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs:**

i. *Rules on voting by secret ballot in committees:* considered the opinion of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and approved the guidelines which appear in it as a supplementary text to the Rules of Procedure to ensure that the procedure used in committees satisfies clear criteria;

ii. *Relations with the Committee of Ministers:*

a. Increased contacts at working level between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers: considered the proposals put forward by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and decided to transmit them to the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers;

b. Questions to the Committee of Ministers: considered the proposals made by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, and asked the Committee to prepare a report on this subject;

iii. *External relations of the Assembly: implementation of proposals contained in Resolution 1600 (2008) on “the Council of Europe and its observer states – the current situation and a way forward”:* considered the opinion put forward by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, and asked the Committee to prepare a report on this subject;

iv. *Measures to improve the democratic participation of migrants: follow-up to be given to Resolution 1618 (2008) concerning a better representation of persons of migrant origin in the membership of the Assembly:* considered the opinion put forward by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and decided that it was not necessary, at this stage, to propose any new provisions for the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly;

- **Forum for the Future of Democracy (Madrid, 15-17 October 2008):** took note of the conclusions of the Forum;

- **Visits by Rapporteurs to Belarus :**

i. authorised Mr Lindblad (Sweden, EPP/CD), Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee, Mrs Hurskainen (Finland, SOC), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Belarus and Mr Rigoni (Italy, ALDE), Rapporteur on the “Situation in Belarus” to visit Belarus at the invitation of that country’s parliament;

ii. authorised Mrs Hurskainen (Finland, SOC), in her capacity of Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Belarus, to join the Chairpersons of the parliamentary troika on Belarus of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, in order to carry out a visit to Belarus in 2009;

- **Joint Conference in 2009 of the CIS Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe:** approved the proposals for possible themes for the conference put forward by the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs;

- **Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organisations:** heard a communication by Mr Lindblad, Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee, on the debate which had taken place and the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on this subject;
- **European Youth Parliament :** took note of an information document transmitted by Mr Mignon, Chairperson of the French Parliamentary Delegation, suggesting the creation of a partnership between the Assembly and the association “European Youth Parliament”;
- **Composition of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs:** approved Mrs Benaki (Greece) as a new member as proposed by the EPP/CD group, for ratification by the Standing Committee;
- **Meetings elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris:**
  - i. Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs: The Hague, 8-9 December 2008;
  - ii. Sub-Committee on Human Rights (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights): Monaco, 9-10 March 2009;
- **Appointment of Assembly representatives for official activities :** see Appendix II;
- **Date and place of the next meetings:** decided to hold the following meetings:
  - . Barcelona, Friday 9 January 2009 at 9.30 am;
  - . Strasbourg, Monday 26 January 2009 at 8 am;
  - . Strasbourg, Friday 30 January at 8.30 am.

Kjell Torbiörn/Alexandra Alléon

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cc.  
 Secretary General of the Assembly  
 Secretariat of the Assembly  
 Secretaries of National Delegations and of Political Groups of the Assembly  
 Observers to the Assembly  
 Secretary General of the Congress  
 Directors General  
 Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe  
 Secretary to the Committee of Ministers  
 Director of Communication  
 Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe

## APPENDIX I

### *i. references to committees*

1. **Doc. 11729**  
**Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Marquet and others**  
**Drafting an additional Protocol to the Convention on Human Rights, concerning the right to a healthy environment**, to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for opinion*
2. **Doc. 11734**  
**Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Mignon and others**  
**Curbing the threats of war in Europe**, no further action
3. **Doc. 11715**  
**Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Err and others**  
**Extending the "most favoured European woman clause" to all Council of Europe member states**: to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for report*

### *ii. modification of a reference*

1. **Doc. 11634**  
**Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Jakavonis and others**  
**Forests : the future of our planet**  
**Ref. no. 3471 of 27 June 2008**, to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs *for report*

### *iii. extension of references*

1. **Doc. 11066**  
**Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Wodarg and others**  
**The need for a global consideration of Human rights implications of Biometrics**  
**Ref. 3288 of 22 January 2007 – validity: 22 January 2009**, extension until 31 January 2010
2. **Doc. 10714 and 10724**  
**Motions for Resolutions presented by Mr Pourgourides and Mr Mercan and others**  
**Freedom of religion and other human rights for non-Muslim minorities in Turkey and for Muslim minorities in Thrace (Western Greece)**  
**Ref. 3203 of 17 March 2006 – validity: 31 December 2008**, extension until 31 March 2009;
3. **Doc. 10641**  
**Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Wohlwend and others**  
**Protection of human rights in emergency situations**  
**Ref. 3230 of 29 May 2006 – validity: 31 December 2008**: extension until 30 April 2009

iv. reply after consultation

1. **Doc. 11633 rev.**

**Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Smet and others  
Cases of sexual violence against women in the east of the Democratic  
Republic of Congo, to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women  
and Men *for report***



## ANNEXE II

In reply to formal invitations, the Bureau appointed the following parliamentarians:

- i. Mr McIntosh (United Kingdom, SOC), Second Parliamentary Forum of the United Nations and the International Telecommunication Union on “shaping the information society: the role of parliaments and legislators”, Hyderabad (India), 2 December 2008;
- ii. Mr Mendes Bota (Portugal, EPP/CD), Interparliamentary Union conference on “Combating violence against women”, Geneva (Switzerland), 2-4 December 2008;
- iii. Mr Jakavonis (Lithuania, ALDE) and Mrs Lilliehöök (Sweden, EPP/CD), 27<sup>th</sup> session of the Baltic Assembly, 14<sup>th</sup> Baltic Council and Conference “Baltic Sea Strategy and Energy Security”, Viljandi (Estonia), 4-6 December 2008;
- iv. Mr Sudarencov (Russian Federation, SOC), Nevsky International Ecological Congress, St Petersburg, 9 December 2008;
- v. Mr Schneider (France, EPP/CD), International Symposium to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights organised by the Robert Schuman Institute, Strasbourg, 12 December 2008.