

Parliamentary Assembly Assemblée parlementaire



FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly

Synopsis No. 2007/09

14 November 2007

The Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Paris on 13 November 2007 with Mr Ateş (Turkey, SOC) in the chair:

- thanked its outgoing Chair for his excellent chairmanship;
- following a request by the President of the Assembly, held an exchange of views on the *Debate on the state of human rights and democracy in Europe* and asked its Chair to inform the Bureau of the views expressed;

As regards:

- ***Use of experience of the "Truth Commissions"*** (Rapporteur: Mr Gross, Switzerland, SOC): held an exchange of views on, and unanimously adopted, an amended draft resolution;
- ***The situation in the Republics of Central Asia*** (Rapporteur: Mr Mercan, Turkey, EPP/CD): held an exchange of views on, and unanimously adopted, an amended draft resolution and a draft recommendation;
- ***Developments as regards the future status of Kosovo*** (Rapporteur: Lord Russell-Johnston, United Kingdom, ALDE): held an exchange of views on the basis of a revised memorandum and took note that the Rapporteur would present a draft report for approval during the next meeting;
- ***Compliance by observer countries with the standards of the Council of Europe*** (Rapporteur: Mr Wilshire, United Kingdom, EDG): held an exchange of views on the basis of a preliminary draft resolution and a preliminary draft recommendation, agreed with the proposal by the Rapporteur to change the title of the report to "The Council of Europe and its Observer States – the current situation and a way forward", authorised him to forward the draft for comments to observer delegations, and decided to invite them to send representatives to attend its next meeting;
- ***Strengthening co-operation with the Maghreb countries*** (Rapporteur: Ms Durrieu, France, SOC): held an exchange of views on the basis of a draft memorandum presented by the Rapporteur following her fact-finding visits to Algeria and Tunisia (19-24 October 2007), agreed to support her proposal to invite Mr Abdelaziz Bouteflika, President of the Algerian Republic, to address the Parliamentary

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Director General and Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly
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Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Director of Communication
Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe

Assembly in the framework of the debate on the external relations (1st Part-session 2008) and asked its Chairman to submit this request to the Bureau;

- **Attitude to memorials exposed to different historical interpretations in Council of Europe member states** (Rapporteur: Mr Eörsi, Hungary, ALDE): held an exchange of views on the basis of a draft memorandum;

- **Provisional name of the Republic of Macedonia in the Council of Europe** (Rapporteur: Mr Agramunt, Spain, EPP/CD): heard an oral statement by the Rapporteur on his visit to Athens and Skopje (30 October – 2 November 2007), held an exchange of views on the basis of a draft memorandum and approved the Rapporteur's proposal to present an information report with a revised title;

- **Request by the Parliament of Kazakhstan for observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly** (Rapporteur: Mr Iwiński, Poland, SOC): held an exchange of views on the basis of a preliminary draft memorandum presented by the Rapporteur, and agreed with the general approach and the timeframe proposed;

- **Situation in Belarus** (Rapporteur: Mr Rigoni, Italy, ALDE): heard an oral statement by the Rapporteur on his visit to Minsk (16-19 October 2007), held an exchange of views on the basis of a revised memorandum and decided to invite Mr Alexander Milinkevich, leader of the For Freedom movement, Mr Vinchuk Viachorka, Chair of the Belarusian Popular Front Party (BNF), Mr Alexander Arkhipov, Chairman of the Standing Committee for Legislation and Legal and Judicial Issues of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Belarus, and Mr Nikolai Cherginets, Chairman of the Standing Committee on international affairs and national security of the Council of the Republic to a Committee meeting, in January;

- **Situation in the Middle East** (Rapporteur: Mr Margelov, Russian Federation, EDG): heard an oral statement by Mrs Durrieu, Chair of the Sub-Committee on the Middle East, on the forthcoming visit to the region by an Ad Hoc Committee set up by the Bureau;

- **Forum for the future of democracy, Madrid, 15-17 October 2007**: heard an oral statement by Mr de Puig, Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Forum, followed by an exchange of views with the participation of Ambassador Eberhard Kölsch, Permanent Representative of Germany, Chair of the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Democracy (GR-DEM);

- **Future work:**

a) **Appointment of Rapporteurs**: appointed

. Mr Wodarg (Germany, SOC) as Rapporteur on *Private military and security firms and the erosion of the state monopoly on the use of force* (subject to his declaration on the absence of conflict of interests);

. Mr van den Brande (Belgium, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur on *Need for a Council of Europe Neighbourhood policy*;

b) **Appointment of representatives**: appointed Mr Gross (Switzerland, SOC) to attend the 4th meeting of CAHDE (Council of Europe Ad hoc Committee on e-democracy, Vienna, Austria, 13-14 December 2007).

- **Situation in Georgia**: was informed by Mr Eörsi, co-Rapporteur on Georgia for the Monitoring Committee, of the latest developments in Georgia and of the visit of the co-Rapporteurs to the country;

- **Meetings abroad**: accepted an invitation to hold a meeting in Stockholm (Sweden) in May 2008, subject to authorisation by the Bureau;

- **Next meetings:**

. Paris, 11 December 2007;

. Strasbourg, January part-session of the Assembly (21-25 January 2008).

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