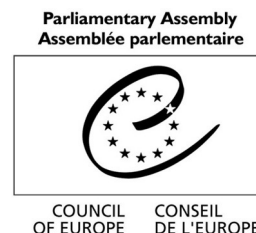


Parliamentary Assembly Assemblée parlementaire



FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly

AS/Pol/CB (2008) 07

3 October 2008

The Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Strasbourg from 29 September to 2 October 2008, with Mr Lindblad (Sweden, EPP/CD) and Mr von Sydow (Sweden, SOC) in the Chair:

as regards:

- **Attitude to memorials exposed to different historical interpretations in Council of Europe member states** (*Rapporteur: Mr Eörsi, Hungary, ALDE*): considered and approved a draft report and adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation;
- **Consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Lindblad, Sweden, EPP/CD*): approved the opinion presented by the Rapporteur and adopted amendments to the draft resolution and recommendation prepared by the Monitoring Committee;
- **Situation in Cyprus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Hörster, Germany, EPP/CD*): took position on the amendments which had been tabled to the draft resolution;
- **Electronic Democracy** (*Rapporteur: Mr Szabó, Hungary, SOC*): considered a draft memorandum presented by the Rapporteur;
- **Ban of cluster munitions** (*Rapporteur: Mr Pflug, Germany, SOC*): considered an outline for a report presented by the Rapporteur;
- **Forum for the future of democracy (Madrid, 15-17 October 2008)**: heard a statement by Mr Lindblad on the meeting of the Advisory Board held on 27 June 2008; by Mr Szabo on the preparatory Seminar held in Madrid on 23-24 September 2008 and by Mr Jean-Louis Laurens, Director General, on the state of the preparation of the Forum, and supported the proposal by Mr Iwiński that the Parliament of Kazakhstan be invited to appoint representatives to the Forum, subject to the approval of the Bureau;
- **Situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Rigoni, Italy, ALDE*): heard statements by Mr Rigoni and Mrs Hurskainen, Chair of the Sub-Committee on Belarus, on the parliamentary elections in Belarus (28 September 2008); held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and confirmed its decision to authorise a visit to Belarus by Mr Rigoni, Mrs Hurskainen and Mr Lindblad, subject to the approval by the Bureau;

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

- **Request by the Parliament of Kazakhstan for observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly** (*Rapporteur* : Mr Iwiński, Poland, SOC): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his visit to the country (14-19 September) and decided to accept an invitation by the Parliament of Kazakhstan to hold one of the next meetings in 2009 in Kazakhstan, subject to the approval by the Bureau;

- **The United Nations – Reform and the Council of Europe member states** (*Rapporteur*: Mr Gross, Switzerland, SOC): authorised the Rapporteur to conduct a fact-finding visit to Brussels (13 October 2008) and to Ottawa in connection with the meeting of the Sub-Committee on External Relations in New York and subject to the authorisation by the Bureau, at no cost for the Assembly;

- **Future work:**

. took note that the dates foreseen for the meeting of the Sub-Committee on External Relations to be held in New York on the occasion of the 63rd General Assembly of the United Nations had been postponed to 3-5 November 2008 (to be confirmed);

. was informed by Mr Biberaj of the intention of the Parliament of Albania to invite the Committee to hold one of its next meetings in Albania;

- **The need for international condemnation of Holodomor in Ukraine in 1932-1933 and 75th Anniversary of mass famine in the territory of the former USSR** (*Rapporteur*: Mr Biberaj, Albania, EPP-CD): held an exchange of views on the subject, including on a possible title for the merged report and authorised the Rapporteur to carry out fact-finding visits to Ukraine and Russia, as well as to Kazakhstan (the latter subject to approval by the Bureau);

. **Appointment of Rapporteurs for report:** appointed:

. Mr Adonts (Armenia, ALDE) as Rapporteur on “*Regional co-operation*” and

. Mr von Sydow (Sweden, SOC) as Rapporteur on “*Situation in Kosovo*”,

and heard from them a declaration on the absence of conflicts of interest;

. **References for information:** took note of the following references for information:

. *Threat to Democracy and Human Rights in Zimbabwe, Ref. 3474, 29.09.08*

. *The right to freedom of religion in Algeria: the case of Habiba Konida, Ref. 347, 29.09.08*

. **Composition of Sub-Committees:** appointed:

Sub-Committee on the Middle-East:

. Mrs Nirenstein (Italy) as titular member and Mr Fassino (Italy) as alternate

Sub-Committee on External Relations:

. Mr Vitali (Italy) as titular member and Mr Rigoni (Italy) as alternate

. Mr Voulgarakis (Greece) as alternate of Mr Vrettos (Greece)

Sub-Committee on Belarus:

. Mr Bricolo (Italy) as titular member

Ad Hoc Sub-Committee on the Forum for the future of Democracy:

- . Mr Aligrudic (Serbia)
- . Mr Cesa (Italy)
- . Mrs Herasym'yuk (Ukraine)
- . Mr Malgieri (Italy),
- . Mr Markov (Russian Federation)
- . Mr Voulgarakis (Greece)

. **Participation to external meetings:** authorised:

- . Mrs Hurskainen to attend a meeting of the Chairs of the Parliamentary Troika on Belarus (Brussels, 7 October 2008);
- . Mr Lindblad and Mr Biberaj to attend the International Forum "75th Anniversary of Holodomor 1932-1933 in Ukraine" (Kiyv, Ukraine, 22 November 2008);

- **Follow-up by the Committee of Ministers to Assembly texts presented by the Political Affairs Committee:** took note of the replies adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 11 June 2008 at the 1029th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, on:

- . Recommendation 1791 (2007) *State of human rights and democracy in Europe*.
- . Recommendation 1820 (2007) *Co-operation between the Assembly and the Conference of INGOs*

- **Next meetings:** decided to hold the following meetings:

- . Paris, 18 November 2008;
- . Paris, 16 December 2008;

- . Ad Hoc Committee on the Forum for the future of Democracy, Madrid, 15-17 October 2008;
- . Sub-Committee on External Relations, New York, 3-5 November 2008 (dates to be confirmed).
- . Sub-Committee on the Middle East, Paris, 17 November 2008 (3.00 to 6.00 pm)

The Sub-Committee on External Relations of the Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Strasbourg on 30 September 2008, with Mr Iwinski (Poland, SOC) in the Chair:

As regards:

- ***the 63rd General Assembly of the United Nations*** (New York, 3-5 November 2008):
 - . heard a statement by its Chair on the state of preparation of the visit of the Sub-Committee to the 63rd General Assembly of the United Nations (New York, 3-5 November 2008);
 - . held an exchange of views on the programme of the visit;
 - . held an exchange of views on the draft Resolution on the Co-operation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe to be presented in New York;
- ***Date and place of the next meeting:*** New York, 3-5 November 2008 (to be confirmed)

The Ad Hoc Committee to participate in the Forum for the future of democracy (of the Bureau), meeting in Strasbourg on 30 September 2008, with Mr Lopez Aguilar (Spain, SOC) in the Chair

As regards:

- ***the next session of the Forum*** (Madrid – 15-17 October 2008):
 - . heard a statement by its Chair;
 - . heard a report by Mr Lindblad on the meeting of the Advisory Board held on 27 June 2008;
 - . heard a report by Mr Szabo on the preparatory seminar held in Madrid on 23-24 September 2008;
 - . was informed of the state of preparation of the Forum by Mr Michael Remmert from the Directorate General of Democracy and Political Affairs;
 - . held an exchange of views on the programme and finalised the Assembly's contribution.
- ***Date and place of the next meeting:*** Madrid, 15-17 October 2008.

Baris Perin, Agnieszka Nachilo, Pavel Chevtchenko, Sonia Sirtori-Milner, Alexandra Alléon