



Political Affairs Committee Secretariat

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

AS/PoI/CB (2011) 09

16 December 2011

The Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Paris on 14 December 2011, with Mr von Sydow (Sweden, SOC) and Lord Tomlinson (United Kingdom, SOC) in the Chair:

as regards:

Situation in Belarus (*Rapporteur: Mr Herkel, Estonia, EPP/CD*):

- held an exchange of views with the participation of:
 - Ms Sacha Koulaeva, Eastern Europe and Central Asia Desk Director, International Federation for Human Rights, Paris;
 - Ms Berit Nising Lindeman, Head of Information/Senior Advisor, Norwegian Helsinki Committee, Oslo;
 - Ms Herdis Thorgeirsdóttir, member (on behalf of Iceland) of the European Commission for Democracy through Law Venice Commission (Venice Commission), President of the European Women Lawyers' Association, Professor, Faculty of Law, Bifrost University;
- considered and approved a report and considered, amended and unanimously adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation;
- decided to request the Venice Commission to provide an assessment of the compatibility with universal human rights standards of the amended "Law on mass events in the Republic of Belarus", that entered into force on 27 November 2011;
- decided to invite representatives of opposition forces from Belarus to an exchange of views during the January 2012 part-session;

The Council of Europe and the Eastern partnership of the European Union (*Rapporteur: M. von Sydow, Sweden, SOC*): considered and approved a report and considered, amended and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;

Measures to improve the democratic character of elections in the Council of Europe member states (*Rapporteur: Mr Gardetto, Monaco, EPP/CD*):

- held an exchange of views, on the basis of an outline report prepared by the Rapporteur, with the participation of:

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- Prof. Jean-Claude Colliard, Vice-president of the Council for democratic elections and member (on behalf of France) of the Venice Commission, President of University Paris 1 - Panthéon-Sorbonne, former member of the Constitutional Council;
 - Dr Beata Martin-Rozumilowicz, Head of the OSCE/ODIHR's Election Department;
 - Mr Nicolas Kaczorowski, Country Director, International Foundation for Electoral systems (IFES), Tunisia Office;
 - Prof. Richard Ghevontian, University Paul Cézanne, Aix-Marseille III, France;
- decided to request the Council for democratic elections to submit a written contribution with a view to the preparation of the report;

Evaluation of progress achieved by Partners for Democracy:

- held an exchange of views, amended and approved a memorandum prepared by the Secretariat upon instructions from the Chair and asked him to forward it to the Bureau;
- agreed to ask the Bureau to refer to the Committee, for report, the evaluation of progress to be achieved by the Parliament of Morocco and the Palestinian National Council in the framework of the implementation of the Partnership for Democracy;

Democracy and human rights in the foreign policy of Council of Europe member states: search for a joint approach (*Rapporteur: Mr Marcenaro, Italy, SOC*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, decided to postpone this item to a forthcoming meeting;

Increasing drug traffic from Afghanistan as a threat to European security (*Rapporteur: Mr Markov, Russian Federation, EDG*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, decided to postpone this item to a forthcoming meeting;

Open discussion on current issues:

- heard a statement by Mr Corlăţean on the meeting of the Sub-committee on the Middle East which took place the previous day;
- held an exchange of views on a range of current political developments;
- instructed its Chair to submit a request to the Bureau for a debate under urgent procedure entitled "Russian Federation between two elections" to be held during the January 2012 part-session of the Assembly;

Future work: issued a call for candidatures for the following reports, with a view to the appointment of Rapporteurs at its next meeting:

- Request for partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- Keeping political and criminal responsibility separate (for opinion);

Next meetings in 2012

- 23-27 January (1st part-session), Strasbourg
- 14 March, Paris (to be confirmed)
- 23-27 April (2nd part-session), Strasbourg
- 29-30 May, Paris (to be confirmed)
- 25-29 June (3rd part-session), Strasbourg
- 7 September, Paris (to be confirmed)
- 1-5 October (4th part-session), Strasbourg
- 14 November, Paris (to be confirmed)
- 12 December, Paris (to be confirmed).

The Sub-Committee on the Middle East of the Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Paris on 13 December 2011, with Mr Corlăţean (Romania, SOC) in the Chair:

- held an exchange of views on the situation in Egypt with the participation of Mr Galal El Ghor, Vice-President of the El Ghad Party;
- held an exchange of views with parliamentary delegations from the Knesset and the Palestinian National Council;
- held an exchange of views on the situation in Libya with the participation of Mr Khaled Ghellali, spokesperson for the Libyan National Democratic Alliance, and Mrs Patricia Jesperger, from the "Committee to support the Libyan uprising";
- agreed to hold its next meeting during the January 2012 Assembly part-session.

Despina Chatzivassiliou, João Ary, Pavel Chevtchenko, Silvia Arzilli

cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
Director General, 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