



SECRETARIAT

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18 March 2015

## To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

### Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris 16 March 2015

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Paris (Salle Clemenceau, Sénat) on 16 March 2015, with Ms Theodora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD) and Mr Tadeusz Iwiński (Poland, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:

- **The Situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Andrea Rigoni, Italy, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his fact-finding visit to Belarus on 25-26 February 2015 and agreed to invite parliamentarians and representatives of the opposition and of civil society to its next meeting;
- **Foreign fighters in Syria** (*Rapporteur: Mr Dirk Van der Maelen, Belgium, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur, and also heard from him a declaration of absence of any conflict of interest; held a hearing with the participation of: Mr Rik Coolsaet PhD, Professor of International Relations, Ghent University, Belgium and member of the European Network of Experts on Radicalisation (ENER); Ms Sandra Krähenmann, Research Fellow, Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, Switzerland; Mr Mats Benestad, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Co-ordinator of the CODEXTER Sub-Group on radicalisation and the receiving of training for terrorism, including via the Internet; and Dr Christophe Paulussen, Senior Researcher, Asser Institute and Research Fellow, International Centre for Counter-Terrorism, The Hague, Netherlands;
- **Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco** (*Rapporteur: Mr Bogdan Klich, Poland, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on the preparation of his fact-finding visit to Morocco which is foreseen from 7 to 12 April 2015, followed by an exchange of views;
- **The activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** (*Rapporteur: Mr Tuur Elzinga, Netherlands, UEL*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his participation in the 3rd OECD Parliamentary Days, on the meeting of the Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD and on bilateral meetings he had with OECD experts on 25-27 February 2015;
- **The political consequences of the crisis in Ukraine** (*Rapporteur: Ms Kristýna Zeličková, Czech Republic, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on her fact-finding visit to Ukraine from 15 to 18 February 2015; took note of and declassified an information note presented by the Rapporteur, and held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission;
- **Call for candidates for report**: called for candidates for report on *The relations of the Council of Europe with Kazakhstan*;

- **Changes in the composition of sub-committees:** approved the following changes:
  - Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World:  
Ms Deborah Bergamini (Italy, EPP/CD) to be member and Mr Andrea Rigoni (Italy, ALDE) to be alternate;
  - Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD:  
Ms Biruté Vėsaitė (Lithuania, SOC) becomes a member,  
Mr Axel E. Fischer (Germany, EPP/CD) replaces Mr Tobias Zech as alternate;
- **Next meetings:** accepted an invitation from Mr Michele Nicoletti, Chairperson of the Italian delegation, to hold a meeting in Rome on 4-5 June 2015 (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau), replacing the meeting foreseen for 29 May, and confirmed forthcoming meetings as follows:
  - during the 2<sup>nd</sup> part-session in Strasbourg (20-24 April 2015)
  - 4-5 June 2015, Rome, Italy (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau)
  - during the 3<sup>rd</sup> part-session in Strasbourg (22-26 June 2015)
  - 1 September 2015 (date and place to be confirmed)
  - during the 4<sup>th</sup> part-session in Strasbourg (28 September-2 October 2015)
  - 4 November 2015 (date and place to be confirmed)
  - 8 December 2015 (date and place to be confirmed).

D. Chatzivassiliou, J. Ary, P. Chevtchenko, S. Arzilli

cc. Secretary General of the Assembly  
Director General, Director 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