



SECRETARIAT

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28 April 2015

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meetings held in Strasbourg from 20 to 23 April 2015

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Strasbourg from 20 to 23 April 2015, with Ms Theodora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD) in the Chair:

Monday 20 April 2015, 14:00 – 15:00, room 1, as regards:

– **Corrupt elites as a threat to democracy:** held a joint hearing with the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, with the participation of:

- Mr Michele Nicoletti (Italy, SOC), Rapporteur on *Corruption as governance regime: a barrier to institutional efficiency and progress* and member of the Parliamentary Assembly's Anti-corruption Platform,
- Mr Raffaele Cantone, President of the Italian Anti-Corruption Authority, Rome,
- Mr Sergej Guriev, Professor of economics at the Paris Institute for Political Studies;

Tuesday 21 April 2015, 08:00 – 10:00, room 9, as regards:

– **The Situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Andrea Rigoni, Italy, ALDE*): considered an introductory memorandum and held a hearing with the participation of:

- Mr Nikolai Samoseiko, Chairperson of the Standing Commission on International Affairs of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus,
- Mr Alaksandr Łahviniec, Vice-Chairperson of The Movement for Freedom, Belarus,
- Mr Valiantsin Stefanovic, Deputy Chairperson of the Human Rights Centre, Viasna;

– **Appointment of a Rapporteur:** appointed Mr Axel E. Fischer (Germany, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur on *The relations of the Council of Europe with Kazakhstan* and heard from him a declaration of absence of any conflict of interest;

Tuesday 21 April 2015, 14:00 – 15:00, room 9, as regards:

– **Situation in Hungary following the adoption of Assembly Resolution 1941 (2013)** (*Rapporteur: Mr Robert Walter, United Kingdom, EC*): considered an introductory memorandum and agreed to consider a draft report and to vote on a preliminary draft resolution at its next meeting;

– **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 his fact-finding visit to Morocco, from 7 to 11 April 2015;

- **Foreign fighters in Syria** (*Rapporteur: Mr Dirk Van der Maelen, Belgium, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur;
- **Authorisations by the Committee:**
 - authorised Ms Kristýna Zelenková (Czech Republic, ALDE) to attend the *International Support for Ukraine Conference* on 28 April 2015 in Kyiv, in the framework of the preparation of her report on the *Political consequences of the crisis in Ukraine*;
 - authorised Mr Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE) to carry out a fact-finding visit to the Palestinian Territories in the framework of the preparation of his report on the *Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Palestinian National Council*, subject to the authorisation of the Bureau*;
- **Changes in the composition of the Sub-Committees:** approved the following changes:
 - Ms Hermine Naghdalyan (Armenia, EC) becomes member of the Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World;
 - Ms Ioanneta Kavvadia (Greece, UEL) becomes member of the Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD, replacing Ms Olga Valavani;
 - Mr Dimitris Vitsas (Greece, UEL) becomes member, with Mr Evangelos Meimarakis (Greece, EPP/CD) as his alternate, in the Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World, replacing Mr Ioannis Dragasakis and Mr Konstantinos Tzavaras respectively;
 - Mr Evangelos Meimarakis (Greece, EPP/CD) becomes member, with Mr Dimitris Vitsas (Greece, UEL) as his alternate, in the Sub-Committee on External Relations, replacing Mr Konstantinos Tzavaras and Mr Ioannis Dragasakis respectively;
- **Other business:**
 - decided to request the extension of the validity of the report on *The political transition in Tunisia* until June 2016;
 - took note of the reply of the Committee of Ministers to Recommendation 2052 (2014) on *Counteraction to manifestations of neo-Nazism and right-wing extremism*;
 - reminded members that the deadline for applications with regards to the 2015 Vaclav Havel Prize was 30 April 2015.
- **Next meetings of the Committee and its Sub-Committees:**
 - considered the draft programme and practical information for the meeting on 4-5 June 2015, in Rome, Italy;
 - decided on forthcoming meetings as follows:
 - during the 3rd part-session in Strasbourg (22-26 June 2015)
 - 1 September 2015 (date and place to be confirmed)
 - during the 4th 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).

Wednesday 22 April 2015, 14:00 – 15:30, room 9, as regards:

- **Ukraine: prospects for peace and humanitarian challenges:** held a joint hearing with the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, with the participation of:
 - Mr Armen Harutyunyan, Head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine,
 - Ms Svitlana Zakrevska, President, Centre Alliance, Kyiv,
 - Ms Oleksandra Matviichuk, Head of the Board of the Centre for Civil Liberties of Ukraine.

* The Bureau gave its authorisation on 24 April 2015.

The **Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World**, meeting in Strasbourg, on 21 April 2015 from 3 pm to 3.30 pm, with Lord Donald Anderson (United Kingdom, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Bureau of the Sub-Committee:** re-elected by acclamation Lord Donald Anderson (United Kingdom, SOC) as Chairperson and Ms Josette Durrieu (France, SOC) as Vice-Chairperson;
- **Request for partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of Jordan** (*Rapporteur: Ms Josette Durrieu, France, SOC*): held an exchange of views with Mr Abdallah Khawaldeh, member of the Jordanian House of Representatives;
- **Update on Israeli-Palestinian relations:** took note of letters from Parliamentary Blocs and Groups of the Palestinian Legislative Council; from Ms Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, and from Mr Edelstein, President of the Knesset with regard to the situation of Ms Khalida Jarrar;
- **Other business:** welcomed a delegation from the Assembly of People's Representatives (ARP) of Tunisia: M. Nadhir Ben Ammou, Deputy to the President of the ARP in charge of legislative affairs, and Ms Lamia Mlayeh, Deputy to the President of the ARP in charge of the relations with the citizens and civil society;
- **Date and place of the next meeting:** left it to the Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

The **Sub-Committees on External Relations** and on the **Middle East and the Arab World** together with the **Sub-Committees on Education, Youth and Sport** and on **Culture, Diversity and Heritage** (of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media), meeting jointly in Strasbourg on 23 April 2015 from 2 pm to 3.30 pm, with **Mr Christian Barilaro** (Monaco, ALDE), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Education, Youth and Sport, and **Lord Donald Anderson** (United Kingdom, SOC), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World, successively in the Chair, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) of the Council of Europe:

- heard **welcome addresses** by Ms Anne Brasseur, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and Ms Souhayr Belhassen, Honorary President of the International Federation for Human Rights (Tunisia) and 2011 North-South Prize Winner;

as regards:

- **The present and prospective role of the European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity (North-South Centre) of the Council of Europe:** held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragnoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and with Mr José Frederico Ludovice, Executive Director of the North-South Centre;
- **Enhancing co-operation between the North-South Centre and the Parliamentary Assembly, namely in the framework of the Council of Europe Neighbourhood Policy:** held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr Mohamed Yatim, Chairperson of the Moroccan partner for democracy delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly, and Mr Luis Javier Gil Catalina, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Spain to the Council of Europe.

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