

AS/Pro (2018) CB 05

2 July 2018

To the members of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

Synopsis of the meeting held in Strasbourg on 26 and 27 June 2018

The Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, meeting in Strasbourg on 26 and 27 June 2018, with Ms Petra De Sutter (Belgium, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:

– **Report of the Independent Investigation Body on the allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly: follow-up to the conclusions relating to the behaviour of Assembly's members and former members (in camera):**

. considered the cases of the former members of the Parliamentary Assembly mentioned in the IBAC report, in the strict framework of the Assembly's ethical rules, examined and took note of their written comments, and, after deliberation, took a decision, in accordance with the Code of conduct for the members of the Parliamentary Assembly, with regard to Mr Agustín Conde, Mr Alain Destexhe, Mr Stef Goris, Mr Andreas Gross, Mr Tadeusz Iwiński, Mr Zmago Jelinčič Plemeniti, Mr Jaakko Laakso, Mr Göran Lindblad, Mr Eduard Lintner, Mr Muslum Mammadov, Ms Karin Strenz, Mr Elkhan Suleymanov, Mr Luca Volontè, and Mrs Karin Woldseth (see decisions appended);

. decided to proceed at its next meeting to the hearing of the former members who requested it;

– **Alleged breach of the Code of conduct for members of the Parliamentary Assembly by Mr Agramunt (Spain, NR):** having taken note of the letter by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly, in accordance with paragraph 20 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliamentary Assembly, decided to hear at its next meeting Mr Agramunt, who was not available to attend this meeting;

– **Analysis of the use made by the Assembly's political groups of their allocations for 2017 (General rapporteur: Mr George Loucaides, Cyprus, UEL):** held an exchange of views, approved a communication to the Bureau of the Assembly, and invited its chairperson to ask the Bureau to instruct it to establish clear rules on the financing and auditing of budgets of political groups of the Assembly, with a view to submitting them to the Bureau for approval;

– **Modification of various provisions of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure (Rapporteur: Mr Egidijus Vareikis, Lithuania, EPP/CD):** postponed the consideration of an introductory memorandum to a next meeting;

– **Work programme:** took note of the work programme;

– **Other business:** was informed about the upcoming World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018) and appointment Ms De Sutter member of the ad hoc Committee of the Bureau;

- **Next meetings:**
 - . in Paris (Office of the Council of Europe), on 3 September 2018 (afternoon)¹;
 - . in Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 4th part-session (8-12 October 2018).

Valérie Clamer, Kateryna Gayevska

- cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
 - 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

¹ In the meantime, the chairperson decided that the committee would meet:

- . in Paris (Office of the Council of Europe), on 3 September (afternoon) and 4 September 2018 (morning)
- . in Paris, on 20 September 2018, at 9.30 am (place to be confirmed).

Appendix - Decisions of the committee on the follow-up to the recommendations and conclusions of the Independent Investigation Body on the allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly relating to the behaviour of individual Assembly members and former members mentioned in its report

Decisions of the committee²

The committee also decided to take action with regard to the former PACE members mentioned in the IBAC report, within the strict framework of the PACE ethical regulations. The former members concerned were given the opportunity to submit their comments in writing or to be heard by the committee. At its third meeting today the committee considered the following cases:

– *Case of Mr Agustín Conde*

1. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Conde seriously breached paragraphs 1.1.2, 1.1.4 and 1.2 of the Code of Conduct for rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly, and the Code of Conduct of the Monitoring Committee; moreover he did not respond to IBAC's summon to give oral evidence before the Investigation Body. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Conde on 20 June 2018.

2. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Conde, there has been a minor breach of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Conde shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Alain Destexhe*

3. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Destexhe breached paragraph 1.1.1 of the Code of Conduct for rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly, and paragraphs 5.1, 5.6, 8 and 9 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Destexhe on 25 June 2018.

4. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Destexhe, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Destexhe shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Stef Goris*

5. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Goris performed lobbying activities in PACE in favour of Azerbaijan while holding the status of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly, in breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Goris on 23 June 2018.

6. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Goris, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Goris shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Andreas Gross*

7. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which noted that Mr Gross declined to co-operate by not responding to the summons to appear addressed to him. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Gross on 20 June 2018.

8. The committee found that Mr Gross has not failed to comply with the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly.

– *Case of Mr Tadeusz Iwiński*

² The decision on the case of Ms Gultakin Hajibayli shall be suspended and the matter referred to the committee, following a challenge by Ms Hajibayli, considered serious and founded by the chairperson of the commission.

9. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Iwiński breached paragraphs 1.1.2, 1.1.4 and 1.2 of the Code of Conduct for rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly, and the Code of Conduct of the Monitoring Committee. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Iwiński on 25 June 2018.

10. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Iwiński, there has been a minor breach of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Iwiński shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Zmago Jelinčič Plemeniti*

11. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Jelinčič Plemeniti had received EUR 25,000 in July 2012 from one of the UK companies involved in the "Laundromat" case therefore creating the suspicion that he acted in favour of Azerbaijan on the occasion of election observations. Moreover, he failed to comply with the Investigation Body's requests for the submission of a written statement. Mr Jelinčič Plemeniti did not reply to the letter sent by the Committee chairperson and did not provide any comments.

12. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Jelinčič Plemeniti, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Jelinčič Plemeniti shall be deprived of the right to access to the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Jaakko Laakso*

13. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Laakso performed lobbying activities in PACE in favour of Azerbaijan while holding the status of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly, in breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Laakso on 19 June 2018. It took note of Mr Laakso's decision to no longer retain his title of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly.

14. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Laakso, there has been a minor breach of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Laakso shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Göran Lindblad*

15. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Lindblad performed lobbying activities in PACE in favour of Azerbaijan while holding the status of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly, in breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Lindblad on 20 June 2018. It took note of Mr Lindblad's decision to no longer retain his title of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly.

16. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Lindblad, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Lindblad shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Eduard Lintner*

17. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Mr Lintner performed lobbying activities in PACE in favour of Azerbaijan while holding the status of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly, in breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. Mr Lintner did not reply to the letter sent by the Committee chairperson and did not provide any comments.

18. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Lintner, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Lintner shall be stripped of his title of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly and deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Muslum Mammadov*

19. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found on the basis of the evidence before it that there are substantial grounds to believe that Mr Mammadov engaged in activity of a corruptive nature. Moreover he declined to co-operate by not responding to the summons to give oral evidence before the

Investigation Body. Mr Mammadov did not reply to the letter sent by the Committee chairperson and did not provide any comments.

20. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Mammadov, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Mammadov shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Ms Karin Strenz*

21. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Ms Strenz breached paragraphs 5.1, 5.6, 8 and 9 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members by failing to disclose a continuing conflict of interest as PACE member when carrying out her various activities in the Assembly relating to Azerbaijan. The committee considered the detailed comments provided by Ms Strenz on 19 June 2018.

22. The committee found that, in the case of Ms Strenz, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Ms Strenz shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Elkhan Suleymanov*

23. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found on the basis of the evidence before it that there are substantial grounds to believe that Mr Suleymanov engaged in activity of a corruptive nature and that he seriously breached paragraph 12 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. Moreover he declined to co-operate by not responding to the summons to give oral evidence before the Investigation Body. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Suleymanov on 20 June 2018.

24. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Suleymanov, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Suleymanov shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Mr Luca Volontè*

25. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found on the basis of the evidence before it that there are substantial grounds to believe that Mr Volontè engaged in activity of a corruptive nature and that he seriously breached paragraph 12 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. Moreover he declined to co-operate by not responding to the summons to give oral evidence before the Investigation Body. The committee considered the comments provided by Mr Volontè on 19 June 2018.

26. The committee found that, in the case of Mr Volontè, there has been a serious violation of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Mr Volontè shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

– *Case of Ms Karin Woldseth*

27. The committee took note of the IBAC's conclusions which found that Ms Woldseth performed lobbying activities in PACE in favour of, amongst others, Azerbaijan while holding the status of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly, in breach of paragraph 16 of the Code of Conduct for PACE members. The committee considered the comments provided by Ms Woldseth on 19 June 2018. It took note of Ms Woldseth's decision to no longer retain her title of Honorary Associate of the Parliamentary Assembly.

28. The committee found that, in the case of Ms Woldseth, there has been a minor breach of the ethical rules of the Parliamentary Assembly; it decided that Ms Woldseth shall be deprived of the right to access the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly premises for life.

These decisions are effective from the date of approval by the committee.