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Activities of the Bureau and the Standing Committee (27 April – 24 June 2012)

Progress report

Bureau of the Assembly

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1. Introduction

1. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau appointed me rapporteur for this report. Since the last part-session of the Assembly, the Bureau has met in Tirana on 24 May 2012. The Standing Committee also met in Tirana, on 25 May 2012.

2. In line with my predecessors, this progress report covers the period outside of Assembly sessions, leaving aside the decisions which have already been ratified by the Assembly. Thus, the first part of this report presents the Bureau's activities since the end of the 2nd part-session of 2012 (23-27 April 2012) up until the 3rd part-session (25-29 June 2012). The activities of the Standing Committee of 25 May 2012 are presented in Chapter 3 of this report.

3. The Bureau will hold its next meetings in Strasbourg during the June part-session on Monday 25 June 2012 at 8 am and Friday 29 June at 8.30 am, and then at 9.30 am on 3 September 2012 in Nice (France).

2. Activities of the Bureau since the last part-session

2.1. Follow-up to the second part-session of 2012 (Strasbourg, 23-27 April 2012)

4. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau approved the following proposals made by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly:

- Follow-up to the current affairs debate on the future of the European Court of Human Rights and the Brighton Declaration: the Bureau decided to refer this issue to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for report;
- [Resolution 1880](#) (2012) on the follow-up by the Committee of Ministers to the work of the Parliamentary Assembly: the Bureau requested the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to prepare concrete proposals for the next meeting of the Bureau in Tirana. At its next meeting on 24 May 2012, the Bureau invited all Committees and members of the Assembly to work towards enhanced interaction between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers through the application of the recommendations contained in paragraph 5 of this Resolution;
- Follow-up to the “free debate”: the Bureau requested the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to inform all members of the Assembly about the possibility, as from the June part-session, to put relevant questions to different institutional entities of the Council of Europe, which will be subsequently transmitted by the Secretariat to these various entities for a written reply.

2.2. Terms of reference of General Rapporteurs

5. At its meeting on 27 April 2012, the Bureau approved the terms of reference of the General Rapporteurs on the Death Penalty (Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) and on the Budget and the intergovernmental programme (Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs), which were subsequently ratified by the Assembly.

2.3. Election observation

2.3.1. Parliamentary elections in Armenia (6 May 2012)

6. On 24 May 2012, the Bureau approved the report issued by the ad hoc committee.

2.3.2. Parliamentary and early presidential elections in Serbia (6 and 20 May 2012)

7. On 24 May 2012, the Bureau approved the report issued by the ad hoc committee.

2.3.3. Parliamentary elections in Ukraine (28 October 2012)

8. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau decided to observe these elections, to constitute an ad hoc Committee for this purpose composed of 30 members (in accordance with the D'Hondt system: EPP/CD: 11, SOC: 9; ALDE: 5, EDG: 4, UEL: 1) and to authorise a pre-electoral mission approximately one month ahead of the elections, composed of five members (one from each group) who are also members of the ad hoc committee.

2.3.4. Parliamentary elections in Georgia (October 2012)

9. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau decided to observe these elections, to constitute an ad hoc Committee for this purpose composed of 30 members (in accordance with the D'Hondt system: EPP/CD: 11, SOC: 9; ALDE: 5, EDG: 4, UEL: 1) and to authorise a pre-electoral mission approximately one month ahead of the elections, composed of five members (one from each group) who are also members of the ad hoc committee.

2.4. Election of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

10. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau decided to invite the two candidates – Ms Battaini-Dragoni and Mr Stoudmann - for an interview during the Bureau meeting of 24 May 2012 and agreed on the modalities. The interviews were held, in camera, on 24 May 2012 in Tirana.

2.5. Issues raised by committees

2.5.1. Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

11. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau authorised Ms Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE) to carry out a fact-finding visit to Tunisia in the context of the preparation of the report on the “Political transition in Tunisia”.

2.5.2. Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

12. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau took note of the letter from the Chairman of the Committee concerning the discipline of Assembly members in the Chamber and decided to refer this issue to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs for report.

2.6. References and transmissions to committees

2.6.1. References approved by the Bureau

13. During the reference period, the Bureau approved the following references, which were subsequently ratified by the Assembly/Standing Committee:

- [Doc. 12888](#), motion for a resolution on “Tackling racism in law-enforcement institutions”, to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination for report;
- Bureau decision on “The future of the European Court of Human Rights and the Brighton Declaration”, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for report;
- Bureau decision on “The discipline of the members of the Parliamentary Assembly”, to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs for report;
- [Doc. 12907](#), motion for a resolution on “Children in detention”, to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development for report;
- [Doc. 12913](#), motion for a recommendation on “Ending discrimination against Roma children”, to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination for report

2.6.2. Request for modification of a reference

14. The Bureau modified the following reference, subsequently ratified by the Assembly:

- [Doc. 12661](#), motion for a resolution on “Counteraction to manifestations of neo-Nazism and xenophobia” (Ref. 3816 of 3 October 2011), already referred to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy for report, to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination for opinion;

2.6.3. Requests for extension of references

15. The Bureau approved the extension of the following references:

- Ref. 3673 of 30 April 2012 on “Harmonisation of regulatory and para-regulatory provisions of monitoring and post-monitoring dialogue procedures”, Committee on Rules and Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, until 31 December 2012;
- Ref. 3596 of 28 September 2009 on “Democracy and the limitation of mandates”, Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, until 30 April 2013;
- Ref. 3684 of 21 June 2010 on “The rule of law in Council of Europe member States: upholding the authority of the Parliamentary Assembly’s recommendations”, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, until 30 June 2013.

2.7. Communications

16. The Bureau took note of communications by the President, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, as well as by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly at its meeting on 24 May 2012 in Tirana.

2.8. Co-operation with the European Parliament

17. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau reconstituted the ad hoc Committee to participate in the Joint PACE/EP Informal body to co-ordinate information sharing in the context of the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights. The Informal body met on 19 June 2012 in Paris with two main items on the agenda:

- “EU accession to the ECHR: stocktaking”, with introductory remarks by Mr Guerrero Salom, member of the European Parliament delegation;
- “Election of Judges to Strasbourg Court: recent developments”, with a short statement by Mr Holovaty, Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly on the Accession of the EU to the ECHR.

2.9. European Conference of Presidents of Parliament (Strasbourg, 20-21 September 2012)

18. On 24 May 2012, the Bureau took note of the themes of the conference: “Future of the European Court of Human Rights – role of national parliaments”; “Is representative democracy in crisis? Challenges for national parliaments” and “Arab revolutions: challenges and opportunities”.

2.10. Youth Assembly 2012 (Strasbourg, 5-7 October 2012)

19. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau took note of a memorandum on the state of preparation drawn up by the Secretariat on the instructions of the President of the Assembly.

2.11. World Forum on Democracy (Strasbourg, 5-11 October 2012)

20. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau took note of the updated draft programme. At its following meeting, it approved the provisional composition of an ad hoc committee to participate in the Forum (Appendix 2).

2.12. Composition of the Monitoring Committee and the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

2.12.1. Monitoring Committee:

21. On 24 May 2012, the Bureau nominated Mr Nikolaj Villumsen (Denmark, UEL) on the basis of a proposal submitted by the UEL group, which was subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee.

2.12.2. Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs:

22. On 24 May 2012, the Bureau nominated Mr Márton Braun (Hungary, EPP/CD) and Mr Şaban Dişli (Turkey, EPP/CD) on the basis of proposals submitted by the EPP/CD group. These nominations were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee.

2.13. Meetings elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris

23. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau authorised the following meetings to be held elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris:

- Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, 4 June 2012, Tirana (at the request of the host parliament, the meeting has been postponed to 13 September 2012);
- Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, 10-11 September 2012, Helsinki;

2.14. Appointment of Assembly representatives for official activities

24. On 27 April 2012, the Bureau authorised Sir Alan Meale (United Kingdom, SOC) and the Earl of Dundee (United Kingdom, EDG) to participate at the Second High Level Meeting on local and regional democracy on 14 May 2012 in Strasbourg.

2.15. Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2012

25. The Bureau appointed the following Assembly representatives:

- *European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity – North-South Centre*: Sir Roger Gale (EDG, Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media) and Ms Maryvonne Blondin (SOC, Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development) and as a substitute: Mr Stefan Schennach (SOC, Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development) and Mr Carlos Costa Neves (EPP/CD, Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media);
- *EUROPA NOSTRA Pan-European Federation for Heritage*: Mr Joseph Falzon (EPP/CD), Vice-Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Culture, Diversity and Heritage.

3. Activities of the Standing Committee (Tirana, 25 May 2012)

26. The Standing Committee held a current affairs debate on “The situation in Ukraine” with Ms Marietta de Pourbaix-Lundin as the introductory speaker.

27. The Standing Committee heard a welcome address from Ms Jozefina Çoba Topalli, Speaker of the Assembly of Albania and held an exchange of views with Mr Edmond Haxhinasto, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers.

28. Following debates, the Standing Committee adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly, which are available on the Assembly website:

- [Resolution 1883](#) (2012) on Jewish cemeteries
- [Recommendation 2001](#) (2012) on Protection of and access to the audiovisual cultural heritage
- [Opinion 282](#) (2012) on the Draft fourth additional protocol to the European Convention on Extradition.

29. The Standing Committee ratified the references as listed in paragraph 2.6 of this report.

30. It ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Bulgaria, Denmark, Italy and the Republic of Moldova, and approved the changes in the composition of Assembly committees (as contained in paragraph 2.12).

31. The Standing Committee took note of the reports of the Ad hoc Committees of the Bureau on the “Observation of parliamentary elections in Armenia (6 May 2012)” and the “Observation of the parliamentary and the early presidential elections in Serbia (6 May 2012)”.

Appendix 1 - Terms of reference of General Rapporteurs

Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Denomination: general rapporteur on abolition of the death penalty

Term of office: one year renewable, subject to a maximum of two years

Subject: the general rapporteur on abolition of the death penalty is mandated to intervene in matters relating to the abolition of the death penalty in different contexts (member and observer states, partners for democracy, states applying for such a status). He or she shall report periodically to the committee on the information collected and the action taken.

Responsibilities:

The role of the general rapporteur is to:

- follow activities and maintain working relations with different Council of Europe bodies dealing with issues relating to the abolition of the death penalty (including the Committee of Ministers, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Committee for the Prevention of Torture and relevant departments of the Council of Europe Secretariat);
- follow activities and maintain working relations with Council of Europe observer states, partners for democracy and other states applying for such status, seeking advice as necessary from international organisations working in the field;
- represent the Committee on behalf of the Assembly when relevant and appropriate;
- in appropriate cases make statements and launch appeals on behalf of the Committee;
- follow up previous resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly on death penalty issues, including [Resolution 1807](#) (2011) on “The death penalty in Council of Europe member and observer states: a violation of human rights”, [Resolution 1560](#) (2007) on “Promotion by Council of Europe member states of an international moratorium on the death penalty”, [Recommendation 1760](#) (2006) on “Position of the Parliamentary Assembly as regards the Council of Europe member and observer states which have not abolished the death penalty”; [Recommendation 1627](#)(2003) and [Resolution 1349](#) (2003) on “Abolition of the death penalty in Council of Europe observer states”, and continue to promote the Assembly's decisions which appear in these texts.

Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

Denomination: general rapporteur on the budget and intergovernmental programme

Term of office: three years (the Council of Europe budget and intergovernmental programme are drawn up on a biennial basis; the current budget covers 2012 and 2013)¹

Subject: it is the duty of the general rapporteur on the budget and intergovernmental programme, in close consultation with the Secretary General of the Assembly, to act on the Assembly's behalf in respect of all matters concerning: the preparation of the Council of Europe draft budgets and those of the Parliamentary Assembly, the budgetary prospects of the Organisation, the choices made with regard to the intergovernmental programme of activities and its funding, the powers and responsibilities of the Assembly with regard to finances, and issues concerning the development of the rules governing the Organisation's finances, the staff regulations, etc. He or she will report regularly to the Committee on any information obtained or action taken.

Responsibilities:

The role of the general rapporteur on the budget and intergovernmental programme is to:

- follow the activities of and maintain working relations with the Committee of Ministers Rapporteur Group on Programme, Budget and Administration (GR-PBA) and to represent the Assembly at its meetings;
- maintain working relations with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Staff Committee;

1. The general rapporteur appointed in 2012 will be responsible for monitoring the 2012-2013 budget and also for following the preparation of the 2014-2015 budget. The duration of his or her term of office must therefore be determined in a rational manner with regard to these dates.

- follow the activities of and maintain working relations with the co-ordinating committees of the co-ordinated international organisations, responsible for recommendations relating to salaries and pensions in respect of these organisations;
- liaise with the committees of national parliaments and interparliamentary assemblies responsible for budgetary issues;
- prepare Assembly resolutions and opinions on the Council of Europe draft budget and on the Assembly's draft budget and monitor the Assembly's decisions in such matters;
- present to the Bureau of the Assembly the annual report on the use made by the Assembly's political groups of their allocations.

**Appendix 2 - Composition of the ad hoc Committee to participate at the World Forum for Democracy
(Strasbourg, 5 – 11 October 2012)**

LIST OF MEMBERS / LISTE DES MEMBRES

Chairperson / Président(e)

.....

Members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy // Membres de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie

To be appointed (20 members maximum)

Members from other Committees/Membres d'autres Commissions

(5 members of each committee maximum)

AS/JUR

Mr Mevlüt ÇAVUŞOĞLU (Turkey, EDG)

Mr Tamás GAUDI NAGY (Hungary, NR)

Mr Rafael HUSEYNOV (Azerbaijan, ALDE)

Ms Elena NIKOLAEVA (Russian Federation, EDG)

Mr Jordi XUCLA (Spain, ALDE)

AS/SOC

the Earl of DUNDEE (United Kingdom, EDG)

Mr Michael HANCOCK (United Kingdom, ALDE)

Mr Ertuğrul KÜRKÇÜ (Turkey, UEL)

Ms Carina OHLSSON (Sweden, SOC)

Mr Luca VOLONTÈ (Italy, EPP/CD)

AS/EGA

Mr Jonas GUNNARSSON (Sweden, SOC)

Mr Boris SHPIGEL (Russian Federation, EDG)

.../...

AS/CULT

Mr Paolo CORSINI (Italy, SOC)

AS/MIG

Mr René ROUQUET (France, SOC)