



AS/Per (2006) PV 2
Strasbourg, 14 June 2006

Standing Committee

Minutes¹

**of the meeting held
in Moscow (Russian Federation)
on 29 May 2006**

¹ Approved by the Assembly on 26 June 2006.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

Mr van der Linden, President of the Assembly, opened the meeting at 11 a.m.

He thanked the Russian parliamentary authorities for their invitation to hold the current meeting of the Standing Committee in Moscow.

2. WELCOME ADDRESS BY MR BORIS GRYZLOV, SPEAKER OF THE DUMA OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr Gryzlov, Speaker of the Duma of the Russian Federation, delivered a welcoming statement. He referred to the responsibility of the Russian Federation during the six-month Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers and the aim to create a Europe without dividing lines and a single European legal space. He regretted the recent politicisation of rulings by the European Court of Human Rights (e.g. in the Ilascu case) and the infringement of the rights of national minorities, most recently in Latvia and Estonia. He said that the Duma would continue to work on the ratification of Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights with a view to the abolition of the death penalty. Russia would furthermore work on relations between the Council of Europe and the European Union as well as enhancing dialogue and co-operation with Belarus.

3. EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH MR SERGEY LAVROV, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION, CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

CM/Inf(2006) 26 - CM(2006) 76

Mr Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, made the statement which is contained in Appendix III to these Minutes.

There followed an exchange of views with questions asked by the following members: the President, MM. Gross, van den Brande, Mrs Severinsen, MM. Gardetto, Mercan, Lloyd, Margelov, Seyidov and Frunda.

In reply, Mr Lavrov made the following points:

- Concerning Protocol No. 6 to the European Convention on Human Rights and the abolition of the death penalty in Russia, he considered that this commitment was amongst a long list undertaken at the time of accession to the Council of Europe in 1996; Russia had not been able until now to ratify Protocol No. 6, not because of a lack of political will but because of public opinion and the events and trial relating to the Beslan hostage-taking and the majority view in Parliament;
- as regards the finalisation of the Memorandum of understanding between the Council of Europe and the European Union (MOU), Russia wanted the Assembly to play an active part;
- the Council of Europe stood for certain fundamental principles which all member countries had to respect, including on democracy; however, there was no uniform model of democracy, local traditions and values also had to be taken into account;
- recent presidential elections in Belarus led to a result which reflected the will of the people; Belarus was no threat to peace and stability in Europe; the Council of Europe should therefore start a dialogue and co-operation with Belarus;
- Russia had some disagreement as regards international election standards applied during the observation of elections; it wanted representatives of the CIS to be included in international observation missions;
- the result of the referendum in the Republic of Montenegro should be accepted and gradually applied; it had to be made possible for the peoples of Montenegro and Serbia to remain on good terms even after the independence of Montenegro;
- Russia supported the efforts by the Euro-Troika to renew dialogue with Iran over its nuclear programme; Iran had a right to a civilian nuclear programme so long as the doubts by the IAEA were dispelled;
- xenophobia and intolerance were a serious concern for the Russian Government and President; they rejected any form of it;
- as regards the Middle East, dialogue with Hamas was necessary as it was the democratically elected government;
- concerning a settlement over the Nagorno-Karabakh region, Russia was interested in a speedy solution under the lead-organisation of the "Minsk Group"; both countries concerned, Armenia and Azerbaijan, were currently negotiating details of a possible settlement so it was preferable to leave them to make progress;

- Russia maintained certain troops outside its borders but they were present in accordance with accepted commitments; in Transnistria, a few hundred troops had to remain to safeguard a dangerous situation as the leadership of Moldova had not respected agreed principles; double standards were applied by Europe when comparing the position taken over Transnistria and Kosovo.

Following the end of the exchange of views, Mr Lloyd, Vice-President of the Assembly, took the chair.

4. EXAMINATION OF NEW CREDENTIALS

Doc. 10938

The Standing Committee **ratified** the credentials of a newly appointed member of the parliamentary delegation of Spain as they appeared in Doc. 10938.

5. MODIFICATIONS IN THE COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEES

No changes were submitted in the composition of committees.

6. REQUEST FOR A CURRENT AFFAIRS DEBATE OR A DEBATE UNDER URGENT PROCEDURE

The President said that no request had been submitted and therefore there would be no debate under item 11.

7. AGENDA

AS/Per (2006) OJ 2 rev.

The draft agenda was **adopted**.

8. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY'S SITTINGS HELD ON 13 APRIL 2006 (MORNING AND AFTERNOON)

AS(2006) PV 14 and 15

The minutes of the Parliamentary Assembly's sittings on 13 April 2006 (morning and afternoon) were **approved**.

9. REFERENCES, TRANSMISSIONS AND MODIFICATIONS OF REFERENCES TO COMMITTEES

AS/Per (2006) 001 - AS/Bur (2006) 45 rev.

The Head of the Table Office referred to documents AS/Per (2006)001 and AS/Bur (2006) 45 and the proposals agreed by the Bureau in the morning.

The Standing Committee **ratified** the references, transmissions and modifications of references as they appeared in the Appendix II below.

10. OBSERVATION OF ELECTIONS

AS/Bur/AH AZ (2006) 5

a. Partial re-run of the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan (13 May 2006)

**Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Bureau:
Mr Leo Platvoet (Netherlands, UEL)**

Mr Platvoet presented the report on the observation of the partial re-run of the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan (13 May 2006) contained in document AS/Bur/AH AZ (2006) 5. He noted some improvements in the electoral process but also expressed doubts as regards the result in some of the constituencies held on 13 May. The follow-up will be discussed during the June Part-Session when there will be a debate on a report by the Monitoring Committee on the credentials of the delegation of Azerbaijan.

Mr Çavuşoğlu noted a number of improvements during the partial re-run of the parliamentary elections.

The Standing Committee **took note** of the report.

b. Referendum on the State Status in the Republic of Montenegro (Serbia and Montenegro) (21 May 2006) Press Release

**Rapporteur of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Bureau:
Mr Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD)**

Mr Gardetto presented the report on the referendum on the State Status in the Republic of Montenegro (Serbia and Montenegro). As the referendum had taken place only recently, no written report was yet available. It would be ready for the June Part-Session when the Assembly could debate it. He noted the very good conditions for the referendum which was generally free and fair. There was very high participation, much more than the 50% required by the EU for the referendum to be recognized. The other condition was a 55% in favor of independence, which was also attained. There was now a great need for dialogue between Serbia and Montenegro to negotiate a friendly separation. In order to consider some of the consequences of the referendum at a time when this issue was topical, he suggested an urgent debate during the June Part-Session on this subject, to which the President of Montenegro, Mr Djukanovic, should be invited.

Mr Gross, supported by Mr van den Brande, agreed with the comments made by Mr Gardetto. However, he considered that the EU had played with fire by imposing the 55% threshold in favor. It was against the fundamental principle of democracy that every vote was equal. The danger would have been a result in the "grey zone" between 50 and 55 %. Mr van den Brande furthermore considered that it was too early to hold an urgent debate already during the June Part-Session, as it was necessary to take full account of the stability of the region.

12. POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Enhancing the visibility of the Council of Europe

Doc. 10907

**Rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee:
Mr João Bosco Mota Amaral (Portugal, EPP/CD)**

Mr Mota Amaral presented the report "Enhancing the visibility of the Council of Europe", which appeared in Doc. 10907.

MM. Schmied and Ateş supported the rapporteur, adding that the decision whether to open a committee meeting to the public should be taken by the committee concerned on a case-by-case basis.

Mr Schreiner regretted the lack of effectiveness in this context of the Council of Europe Paris office. It should be reinforced, in particular by a press officer present in Paris.

Mr van den Brande said that the values of the Council of Europe could not be sold like carpets. Visibility had to be part of an overall strategy, with content being the most important element. The Council of Europe should centre its activities on its "core business". Committee meetings outside Strasbourg and Brussels could be made accessible to media of the host country.

Mr Gardetto underlined that, before reports were debated in the Assembly, their subjects needed to be highlighted by the press and media services of the Council of Europe. In this sense, the CE had an educational role to play with the media.

Mr Mota Amaral concluded by saying that members of the Parliamentary Assembly needed to take advantage of their double mandate (national and European) and put issues covered by the Assembly on the agenda of their respective national parliament.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the recommendation and the resolution.

13. LEGAL AFFAIRS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

European Prisons Charter

Doc. 10922

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights:
Mr Michel Hunault (France, EDG)**

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs (for opinion):
Mr Ali Rıza Gülçiçek (Turkey, SOC)**

Doc. 10936

Mr Hunault presented the report on the "European prisons Charter" as it appeared in Doc. 10922.

Mr Gülçiçek outlined the opinion on the report as it appeared in Doc. 10936.

MM Jurgens, Gardetto and Marty supported the report.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the recommendation.

14. ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AND DEVELOPMENT

a. Budgets of the Council of Europe for the financial year 2007

Doc. 10918+Amendment

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development:
Mr Paul Wille (Belgium, ALDE)**

b. Expenditure of the Assembly for the financial year 2007

Doc. 10919+Amendment

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development:
Mr Paul Wille (Belgium, ALDE)**

Mr Wille presented his reports on "Budgets of the Council of Europe for the financial year 2007" and "Expenditure of the Assembly for the financial year 2007" as they appeared in Docs. 10918 and 10919 respectively.

Amendment No. 1 to the draft opinion contained in Doc. 10918 was presented by Mrs Zapfl-Helbling.

MM Wille and Vrettos opposed the amendment.

Following a vote, this amendment was not adopted.

Amendment No. 1 to the draft opinion contained in Doc. 10919 was presented by Mrs Zapfl-Helbling.

MM Wille and Vrettos opposed the amendment.

Following a vote, this amendment was not adopted.

Following two separate votes, the Standing Committee **adopted** the two opinions.

c. Economic development in Ukraine: a test case for European solidarity

Doc. 10920

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development:
Mr Andrea Rigoni (Italy, EPP/CD)**

Mr Rigoni presented his report on "Economic development in Ukraine: a test case for European solidarity" as it appeared in Doc. 10920.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the resolution.

d. The need to enhance European air safety

Doc. 10912

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development:
Mr Anders G. Högmark (Sweden, EPP/CD)**

Mr Vrettos presented the report on “the need to enhance European air safety” (Doc. 10912) on behalf of Mr Högmark.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the resolution.

15. MIGRATION, REFUGEES AND POPULATION

a. Working migration from the countries of Eastern and Central Europe: present state and perspectives Doc. 10842

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population:
Mrs Jelena Hoffmann (Germany, SOC)**

Mr Çavuşoğlu presented the report on “working migration from the countries of Eastern and Central Europe: present state and perspectives” (Doc. 10842) on behalf of Mrs Hoffmann.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the recommendation and the resolution.

b. Demographic challenges for social cohesion Doc. 10923+ Amendments

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population:
Mrs Vera Oskina (Russia, EDG)**

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs (for opinion):
Mr Michael Hancock (United Kingdom, ALDE)** Doc. 10937

Mrs Oskina presented the report on “Demographic challenges for social cohesion” as it appeared in Doc. 10923.

Mr Hancock gave the opinion of the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs as it appeared in Doc. 10937.

MM Seyidov and Cavusoglu supported the report.

Mr Hancock presented two amendments to the draft resolution.

Following two separate votes, both amendments were **adopted**.

Following a further vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the recommendation and the resolution as amended.

16. CULTURE, SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

a. Education for balanced development in school Doc. 10767

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education:
Mr Anatoliy Korobeynikov (Russia, SOC)**

Mr Korobeynikov presented the report on “Education for balanced development in school” as it appeared in Doc. 10767.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the recommendation.

b. Cultural diversity of the Northern Caucasus Doc. 10869

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education:
Mrs Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ADLE)**

Mrs Brasseur presented the report on the « cultural diversity of the Northern Caucasus » as it appeared in Doc. 10869.

Mr Korobeynikov supported the report.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the recommendation.

17. ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE AND LOCAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Conservation and use of the landscape potential of Europe

Doc. 10928

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs:
Mr Valeriy Sudarenkov (Russia, SOC)**

Mr Sudarenkov presented the report on “Conservation and use of the landscape potential in Europe” as it appeared in Doc. 10928.

Mr Schmied supported the report.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the recommendation.

18. RULES OF PROCEDURE AND IMMUNITIES

a. Obligation for new members of the Assembly relating to the aims and basic principles of the Council of Europe

Doc. 10865

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities:
Mr Karim Van Overmeire (Belgium, NR)**

Mr Van Overmeire presented the report as it appeared in Doc. 10865.

Mr Gross supported the report and pointed out that the obligation to sign a written statement will apply to all members at the opening of the 2007 Session in January.

Following a vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the resolution.

b. Procedure for decisions by committees relating to candidates eligible for election by the Assembly

Doc. 10864

**Rapporteur of the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities:
Mr John Greenway (United Kingdom, EDG)**

In the absence of Mr Greenway, Mr Gross presented the report on “Procedure for decisions by committees relating to candidates eligible for election by the Assembly” as it appeared in Doc. 10864.

Mr Jurgens presented an oral amendment, to delete the words “eligible for election by the Assembly” from paragraph 5.1 of the draft resolution.

The President noted that there was no objection to taking the oral amendment.

Mr Gross noted that where there was a single candidate for elections, there was no need for a secret ballot as such an election was by acclamation.

Following a vote, the oral amendment was **adopted**.

Following a further vote, the Standing Committee **adopted** the resolution as amended.

19. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

20. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The Standing Committee **confirmed** that the next meeting will be held in San Marino on Friday 17 November 2006.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

Appendix I

LIST OF THOSE PRESENT

President of the Parliamentary Assembly

Mr	van der LINDEN, René	Netherlands
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Vice-Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly

Mr	JURGENS, Erik	Netherlands
Mr	SCHREINER, Bernard	France
Mr	AZZOLINI, Claudio	Italy
Mrs	PAPADIMITRIOU, Elsa	Greece
Mrs	ABURTO, María Rosario Fátima	Spain
Mr	LLOYD, Tony	United Kingdom
Mr	SZABÓ, Zoltán	Hungary
Mr	MERCAN, Murat	Turkey
Mr	PREDA, Cezar Florin	Romania
Mr	GARDETTO, Jean-Charles	Monaco
Mr	KOSACHEV, Konstantin	Russian Federation

Chairpersons of Political Groups

Mr	de PUIG, Lluís Maria	Socialist Group
Mr	Van den BRANDE, Luc	Group of the European People's Party
Mrs	SEVERINSEN Hanne (replacing Mr EÖRSI, Mátyás)	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Mr	MARGELOV, Mikhail	European Democrat Group
Mr	EINARSSON, Mats	Group of the Unified European Left

Chairpersons of national delegations

Mr	SEYIDOV, Samad	Azerbaijan
Mr	HENRY, Jean-Pol	Belgium
Mr	CHRISTODOULIDES, Doros	Cyprus
Mr	BENEŠ, Miroslav	Czech Republic
Mrs	SEVERINSEN, Hanne	Denmark
Mr	ELO, Mikko	Finland
M.	SCHREINER, Bernard	France

Mrs	PAPADIMITRIOU, Elsa	Greece
Mr	SZABÓ, Zoltán	Hungary
Mr	AZZOLINI, Claudio	Italy
Mr	PULLICINO ORLANDO, Jeffrey	Malta
Mr	GARDETTO, Jean-Charles	Monaco
Mr	FRUNDA, György	Romania
Mr	KOSACHEV, Konstantin	Russian Federation
Mr	de PUIG, Lluís Maria	Spain
Mrs	OHLSSON, Carina	Sweden
Mr	MARTY, Dick	Switzerland
Mr	MERCAN, Murat	Turkey
Mr	LLOYD, Tony	United Kingdom

Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee

Mr	ATEŞ, Abdülkadir	Turkey
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Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Mr	MARTY, Dick	Switzerland
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Chairperson of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Mr	VRETTOS Konstantinos (replacing Mr KIRILOV, Evgeni)	Greece
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Chairperson of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

Mr	ÇAVUŞOĞLU, Mevlüt	Turkey
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Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Mr	LEGENDRE, Jacques	France
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Chairperson of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

Mr	SCHMIED, Walter	Switzerland
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Chairperson of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Mrs	ZAPFL-HELBLING Rosmarie (replacing Mrs CLIVETI, Minodora)	Switzerland
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Chairperson of the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities

Mr	GROSS, Andreas	Switzerland
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Chairperson of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by member states of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee)

Mr	FRUNDA, György	Romania
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Other members of the Parliamentary Assembly :

Mr LAUKKANEN, Markku	Finland
Mr SLUTSKY, Leonid	Russian Federation

Rapporteurs :

Mrs BRASSEUR Anne	Luxembourg
Mr ÇAVUŞOĞLU Mevlüt (replacing Mrs Hoffmann Jelena)	Turkey
Mr GARDETTO Jean-Charles	Monaco
Mr GROSS Andreas (replacing Mr Greenway John)	Switzerland
Mr GÜLÇİÇEK Ali Rıza	Turkey
Mr HANCOCK Michael	United Kingdom
Mr HUNAUULT Michel	France
Mr KOROBEYNIKOV Anatoliy	Russia
Mr MOTA AMARAL João Bosco	Portugal
Mrs OSKINA Vera	Russia
Mr PLATVOET Leo	Netherlands
Mr RIGONI Andrea	Italy
Mr SUDARENKOV Valeriy	Russian Federation
Mr Van OVERMEIRE Karim	Belgium
Mr VRETTOS Konstantinos (replacing Mr Högmark Anders G.)	Greece
Mr WILLE Paul	Belgium

Invited Guests

Mr GRYZLOV Boris, Speaker of the Duma of the Russian Federation
 Mr LAVROV Sergey, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly

Mr Mateo SORINAS, Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly
 Mr Kjell TORBIÖRN, Head of the Office of the Secretary General of the Assembly and Head of Secretariat of the Bureau
 Mr Horst SCHADE, Head of the Table Office
 Mr Peter SICH, Head of the Private Office of the President
 Mrs Micaela CATALANO, Head of the Communication Unit
 Mrs Alexandra ALLEON, Assistant to the Secretary General, Co-Secretary of the Bureau

Council of Europe

Mr Marc SCHEUER, Director of Political Advice and Co-operation, Directorate General of Political Affairs
 Mrs Francine ARNOLD-PAULI, Administrator, Secretariat of the Committee of Ministers

Other

Mr Jean-Claude KIEFFER, DNA Journalist

APPENDIX II

SYNOPSIS

The **Standing Committee**, meeting on 29 May 2006 in Moscow with Mr van der Linden, President of the Assembly, and then Mr Lloyd, Vice-President, in the chair:

- heard a welcome address by Mr Boris Gryzlov, Speaker of the Duma of the Russian Federation;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers;
- ratified the credentials of a new member of the Assembly submitted by the delegation of Spain;
- ratified the references and modifications of references proposed by the Bureau which are contained in the appendix hereafter;
- held two exchanges of views, respectively on the observation of the partial re-run of the parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan (13 May 2006) on the basis of the report by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Bureau presented by Mr Platvoet, and on the referendum on the State Status in the Republic of Montenegro (Serbia and Montenegro) (21 May 2006) on the basis of the report presented by Mr Gardetto;
- adopted, on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly, the following texts:

Resolution 1498 (2006)	Enhancing the visibility of the Council of Europe;
Resolution 1499 (2006)	Economic development in Ukraine: a test case for European solidarity;
Resolution 1500 (2006)	The need to enhance European air safety;
Resolution 1501 (2006)	Working migration from the countries of Eastern and Central Europe: present state and perspectives;
Resolution 1502 (2006)	Demographic challenges for social cohesion;
Resolution 1503 (2006)	Obligation for new members of the Assembly relating to the aims and basic principles of the Council of Europe;
Resolution 1504 (2006)	Procedure for decision by committees relating to candidates eligible for election by the Assembly;
Recommendation 1746 (2006)	Enhancing the visibility of the Council of Europe;
Recommendation 1747(2006)	European prisons charter;
Recommendation 1748 (2006)	Working migration from the countries of Eastern and Central Europe: present state and perspectives;
Recommendation 1749 (2006)	Demographic challenges for social cohesion;
Recommendation 1750 (2006)	Education for balanced development in school;
Recommendation 1751 (2006)	Cultural diversity of the Northern Caucasus;
Recommendation 1752 (2006)	Conservation and use of the landscape potential of Europe;

Opinion No. 259 (2006)

Budgets of the Council of Europe for the financial year 2007;

Opinion No. 260 (2006)

Expenditure of the Assembly for the financial year 2007;

- confirmed that the next meeting of the Standing Committee will be held in San Marino on Friday 17 November 2006.

Appendix to the Synopsis

Decisions on documents tabled for reference to committees

A. REFERENCES TO COMMITTEES

1. **Reference No. 3219**
Doc. 10674
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Gardetto and others
The fight against harm to the environment in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, referred to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for report*
2. **Reference No. 3220**
Doc. 10675
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Gardetto and others
Equal rights and opportunities for the disabled and their integration in society, transmitted to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, *for information*
3. **Reference No. 3221**
Doc. 10701
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Jakavonis and others
Potential threats to the ecosystem of the Baltic Sea arising from the chemical munitions buried in its seabed during the Second World War, referred to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for report*
4. **Reference No. 3222**
Doc. 10769
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Meale and others
Protection of the environment in the Arctic region, referred to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for report*
5. **Reference No. 3210**
Doc. 10844
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr de Puig and others
Regionalisation in Europe, referred to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for report*
6. **Reference No. 3224**
Doc. 10847
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Açıkgöz and others
Environmental problems in the Black Sea Region, transmitted to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for information*
7. **Reference No. 3211**
Doc. 10853
Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Mikhailova and others
Violations of human rights in North Korea, transmitted to the Political Affairs Committee, *for information*
8. **Reference No. 3212**
Doc. 10854
Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Vermot-Mangold and others
Combating trafficking in human beings: promoting the rapid entry into force of the Council of Europe Convention, transmitted to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for information*

9. **Reference No. 3213**
Doc. 10855
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Pehlivan and others
Equality between girls and boys in Europe, transmitted to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for information*
10. **Reference No. 3214**
Doc. 10856
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Marty and others
UN Security Council black lists, referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*
11. **Reference No. 3215**
Doc. 10857
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Hunault and others
Creation of a Euro-Mediterranean Bank, transmitted to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, *for information*
12. **Reference No. 3216**
Doc. 10858
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Jacquat and others
The health effects of the Chernobyl disaster in Europe: 20 years after, review and lessons for the future, transmitted to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, *for information*
13. **Reference No. 3217**
Doc. 10859 rev.
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr de Puig and others
Council of Europe annual report on the state of human rights in Europe, referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*
14. **Reference No. 3218**
Doc. 10860
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Lindblad and others
Condemning the crimes of totalitarian communist regimes, transmitted to the Political Affairs Committee, *for information*
15. **Reference No. 3225**
Doc. 10885
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Vésaité and others
The spread of avian influenza and the admission of Taiwan as an Associate Member in the World Health Organisation, transmitted to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, *for information*
16. **Reference No. 3226**
Doc. 10887
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Margelov and others
Inadmissibility of anti-Semitism in the social and political life of the Council of Europe member states, referred to the Political Affairs Committee *for report* and the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for opinion*
17. **Reference No. 3227**
Doc. 10888
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Preda and others
Protecting the Danube Delta, transmitted to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for information*
18. **Reference No. 3228**
Doc. 10891
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Etherington and others
Co-operation between the Assembly and the Conference of INGOs, referred to the Political Affairs Committee *for report at the Standing Committee*

19. **Reference No. 3229**
Doc. 10896
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr R. Huseynov and others
The state of the historically important cultural monuments of Azerbaijan in the territory of Armenia, transmitted to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, *for information*

B. REPLY AFTER CONSULTATION

20. **Reference No. 3230**
Doc. 10641
Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Wohlwend and others
Protection of human rights in emergency situations, referred to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*

C. REQUESTS TO MODIFY A REFERENCE

21. **Reference No. 3223**
Doc. 10781
Freedom of the media in Russia
Letter from Mrs Bargholtz and Mr Lindblad to the President of the Parliamentary Assembly
Modification of Reference No. 3165 of 23 January 2006, referred to the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) *to be taken into account* in the preparation of the monitoring report with respect to the Russian Federation

22. **Reference No. 3231**
Doc. 10823
Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Venendaal and others
Energy savings as a way out of Europe's energy crisis
Reference No. 3183
and
Doc. 10697
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Schmied and others
Preserving the environment by energy savings within the public sector and the Council of Europe
Reference No. 3196
Modification of the references, added the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for opinion*

23. **Reference No . 3232**
Doc. 10827
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Bockel and others
Transfrontier co-operation
Modification of Reference No. 3184, referred to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for report*

D. REQUEST TO EXTEND A REFERENCE

24. **Doc. 10156**
Motion for a recommendation by Mr Azzolini and others
Seal hunting
Ref. 2962 valid until 30 April 2006, *extended until 31 December 2006.*

APPENDIX III

ADDRESS BY Mr S.V. LAVROV RUSSIAN MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

This year marks the tenth anniversary of our accession to the Council of Europe. These have not been easy years, in many respects. Essentially, a new Russian State was being created and, what is more, on a basis that was far from fully viable. Sweeping changes were required, to the very foundations of our lives. We had to start all over again in forming an economic system and all the different branches of power, and organising relations between the federal centre and the regions. Our foreign policy took on features that geopolitical realities had ruled out in the past, just to take the example of forging optimum relations with countries which had previously formed a united whole with Russia.

We have striven to resolve this multitude of tasks not in isolation, not in a vacuum, but in cooperation with partners on the international scene, including, of course, the Council of Europe. We cannot say that our journey has been an easy one. But the Council of Europe's positive contribution to the all-round modernisation of Russia's society and State is clear. Suffice it to say that, of 200 Council of Europe conventions, we have signed and ratified 46. Of course, far from all the tasks have been resolved, not all our obligations are fulfilled. But I think that we are now at a stage where no one has any doubts: fulfilling the remaining obligations is not a question of whether there is the political will or not, but simply a matter of time.

Russia will not turn off from its democratic path. When tackling ongoing complex issues, such as improvements to legislation, including legislation on non-governmental organisations for example, we also turn to the Council's expertise and recommendations. When we worked on the law on NGOs, we repeatedly referred to the Council's opinion and recommendations and took them into account. This is one example of the Council of Europe's real expert input into our domestic efforts to develop democracy. And we intend to make full use of Council of Europe conventions in tackling the issue of fighting corruption for example.

In terms of pace and content, implementing the choice of democracy has to match the demands of social development and the readiness of society to embrace changes, and it must take deep-seated traditions and values fully into account. Mechanically transplanting someone else's experience and model of democracy into different soil does not work. This is true for any country that has followed a historical path differing from the one regarded as standard in the West. Democratic models imposed from outside simply do not work, they cannot germinate. They may even prompt rejection. This factor must be considered when planning out the future development of the Council of Europe itself and determining its tactical and strategic priorities.

I would like to confirm that we take the Council of Europe's monitoring as regards Russia most seriously. At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that the scope of obligations we are required to fulfil is significantly greater than that of the obligations imposed on the Council of Europe's "founding fathers" in times gone by. We are not making a problem out of it, but we do see that it is to some extent politically motivated. To cite an example, and it already sounds like an anecdote now, when we joined the Council of Europe we were required to refrain from using the term "near-abroad", an expression used strictly informally to describe our new political environment, consisting of the former soviet republics. Yet now the notion of "neighbourhood" to describe those very countries has become official and has simply passed into the terminology and actual policy of the European Union. But of course no one is going to demand that the EU refrain from using such a term.

We see that the Council of Europe is in a momentous phase of development. This is not only due to its internal transformation and search for its own niche in the system of international institutions which is becoming established. No less important is the fact that the Council of Europe has essentially reached the geographical limits of its enlargement. One way or another, its present membership may be considered as near-definitive. There only remains a question over Belarus. We are convinced that this issue will be resolved. It can be resolved only through dialogue, by involving Belarus, not isolating it. That, unfortunately, is what happened when, owing to personal restrictions introduced by the EU, the speaker of the Belarus Parliament could not take part in the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly events he had been invited to. But, on the whole, I say again that the Council's membership is near-definitive. Consequently, the task of bringing new Council members into line with the corresponding standards, which has largely determined the Organisation's agenda in recent years, will soon be exhausted.

For that reason, it is now that it is important to consider the focus of the Council of Europe's political energies and organisational resources in the more distant future. It would probably be wrong to narrow everything down to the work of the European Court of Human Rights and various monitoring mechanisms. That is hardly a basis on which to forge a major independent role in the European architecture under construction.

For our part, our approach to Russia's chairmanship at the Council is above all geared to ensuring this Organisation's viability in the highly competitive international sphere. It is no coincidence that the Council of Europe's Third Summit concluded that the Organisation must not focus its entire action solely on human rights, as important as these are. We can and we need to work more energetically on other areas where the Council of Europe is in a position to play a significant role. In particular, these concern new threats and challenges, the guaranteeing of social rights, including for vulnerable groups, work in the youth and sports sectors and many others. It was nice to hear René van der Linden, just now in his introductory statement, drawing attention to these priorities too within the Council of Europe's work.

At the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers session held in Strasbourg on 19 May the Russian chairmanship unveiled its priorities and a packed programme of events for the coming six months. A whole host of fora with a strong parliamentary dimension are planned. Several events are being prepared and are to be run entirely on parliamentary lines. Of special importance for us is a major conference on the role of political parties, to be held in Moscow this autumn by our Federal Assembly in collaboration with colleagues from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and national parliaments within the Forum for the future of democracy framework.

We are counting on the support of our Parliamentary Assembly colleagues and a constructive contribution from them to help Russia fulfil its chairmanship functions. This applies in particular to work to establish new frameworks for relations between the Council of Europe and the European Union. As we strive to ensure that the Council remains a fully valued international organisation, it is not in our interests to see the Council of Europe reduced, through some well-known tricks of law, to the role of a preparatory master-class for EU accession.

I would point out that we are not motivated by any kind of self-interest in this connection; in purely national terms any such attempts to restructure the Council of Europe and lessen its role would not be a particular worry for us: Russia is self-sufficient as regards its own relations with the European Union. Work is under way on a "roadmap" for four common areas, and we are launching a process aimed at concluding a new agreement on strategic partnership with the European Union to replace the existing partnership and cooperation agreement. All these trends were confirmed at the recent Russia-EU summit in Sochi. So concern over CoE-EU relations on an equal footing coming from us is above all a sign of recognition of the uniqueness of the Council of Europe and its special role in European affairs. No one can have an interest in dividing lines being put down via the Council of Europe. We can see from the example of the OSCE the sad consequences of attempts to divide States into first or second category.

The Council of Europe must preserve and strengthen its comparative advantages, which are above all linked to a unique arsenal of legally binding instruments. It is precisely in the strengthening of this base of conventions that we see a major channel for further Council of Europe activity geared to seeking joint responses to new challenges. I believe that the Council could blaze the trail for international efforts to combat cyberterrorism for example, which is an extremely topical aspect of this evil phenomenon.

In order to rule out any rivalry between the legal spheres of the Council of Europe and the European Union, it is important to establish a basic approach whereby the Council's member States turn to its legal instruments as their first port of call. And only in the absence of such an instrument could EU members then act on the legal plane in its narrower format. This might be called the "Council of Europe first" approach.

Key among the traditional flagship areas of the Council of Europe are regional and transfrontier cooperation, which we are interested in actively developing. As was pointed out at the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers session in Strasbourg, we back the idea in principle of setting up a Centre for this purpose in Saint Petersburg. But its terms of reference must be firmed up and its tasks laid down in detail so that the Centre's operation brings real returns for all member States, including for Russia as one of the parties involved.

We are looking to parliamentarians to appreciate and get behind our idea of devising, within the Council of Europe, a convention on standards for elections and respect for fundamental electoral rights and freedoms, which Mr Gryzlov has just mentioned. In this sphere, we encounter "double standards" literally on every step of the way. Revising procedures in this area is a task that came to a head and even boiled over long ago.

I am convinced that the Council of Europe will be able to play a more positive role if a serious effort is made to build dialogue between civilisations. We plan to hold a number of events in this sphere during our chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers. And here too, we are counting on cooperation with the Parliamentary Assembly.

I do not think I am wrong in saying that the strength of the Council of Europe is the remarkably strong tie between the parliamentary and governmental dimensions in its work. An entire generation of Russian deputies and politicians has already been through the process of parliamentary cooperation and work in the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly. The debates unfolding at Parliamentary Assembly sessions are followed most attentively by government structures in Russia. We see that, from time to time, these discussions do not reach beyond the framework of outdated, dogmatic representations of our country. There are cases where a surprisingly shallow approach is taken to very serious issues. There have been examples of some honourable member of the Parliamentary Assembly being given a brief for a few months to get to the bottom of an extremely complex historical question. Then a report is heard, there are two or three days of discussion and some critical verdict is adopted against this or that member State. I do not think that this can be called a serious approach. We do, of course, perfectly understand the specific character of parliamentary politics and, as people say, no one is immune to it. But on the whole a more responsible approach must be taken both to our common complex history and to the tasks of the present day.

It is very important, and I would like to emphasise this in conclusion, to strengthen the culture of consensus within the Council of Europe. Through strengthened trust and mutual respect for one another's views, there will be greater accord in Europe.

Let me conclude with a call on the esteemed leadership of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly and all the members of the national delegations: let us be a little more down to earth in our work and concentrate on the hot topics of the present day. The development of society and modern international relations pose so many real, and not artificial, challenges for us.