



The Session

THE INFORMATION GUIDE FOR PLENARY SESSIONS OF PACE

22-26 June 2009

Monday 22

- Opening statement by Assembly President Lluís Maria de Puig
- Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and the Standing Committee
- Statement by Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
- Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly, presented by Slovenian Foreign Minister Samuel Žbogar
- Statement by Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Tuesday 23

- Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to San Marino
- Situation in Belarus
- Address by Mary McAleese, President of Ireland
- The activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2008: reinforcing economic and democratic stability, and statement by EBRD President Thomas Mirow
- The challenges of the financial crisis to the world economic institutions
- Reconsideration on substantial grounds of previously ratified credentials of the Ukrainian delegation

Wednesday 24

- The state of human rights in Europe: the need to eradicate impunity, and statement by Antonio Cassese, President of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon
- Award ceremony for the Assembly's 2009 Human Rights Prize
- The state of human rights in Europe and the progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure, and statements by:
 - Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International
 - Holly Cartner, Director for Europe and Central Asia, Human Rights Watch
- Europe's forgotten people: protecting the human rights of long-term displaced persons, and statement by Walter Kälin, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons
- The functioning of democratic institutions in Armenia

Thursday 25

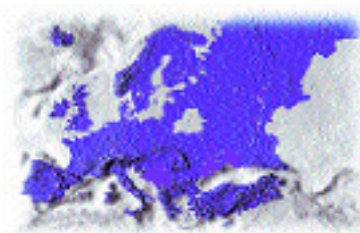
- Urgent debate on the situation in Iran
- Address by Borut Pahor, Prime Minister of Slovenia
- The funding of public service broadcasting
- Joint debate:
 - Renewable energies and the environment
 - Nuclear energy and sustainable development

Friday 26

- Establishment of a "Partner for democracy" status with the Parliamentary Assembly
- History teaching in conflict and post-conflict areas
- The urgent need to combat so-called "honour crimes"
- Joint debate:
 - Draft Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority
 - Draft Protocol No. 3 to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities concerning Euroregional co-operation groupings (ECGs)

The 47

The Council of Europe brings together 47 democracies including 22 central and eastern European countries. Today, the Organisation has almost completed its enlargement but continues to increase its monitoring to ensure that all its members respect the obligations and commitments they entered into when they joined.



Member states: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

The Parliamentary Assembly

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 636 members (318 representatives and 318 substitutes) from the national parliaments of the 47 member states of the Council of Europe.

Countries that have joined the Council of Europe since November 1990: Hungary (1990), Poland (1991), Bulgaria (1992), Estonia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Slovak Republic, Czech Republic, Romania (1993), Andorra (1994), Latvia, Albania, Moldova, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Ukraine (1995), the Russian Federation, Croatia (1996), Georgia (1999), Armenia, Azerbaijan (2001), Bosnia and Herzegovina (2002), Serbia and Montenegro (2003), replaced by Serbia (2006), Monaco (2004), Montenegro (2007).

Applications for membership: Belarus (12 March 1993).

The Special Guest status of the Belarus parliament was suspended on 13 January 1997.

The parliaments of Canada (1997), Israel (1957) and Mexico (1999) hold observer status with the Assembly.

The political groups



203

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD)



184

Socialist Group (SOC)



103

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)



92

European Democrat Group (EDG)



30

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL)

The Assembly committees

84 seats

Political Affairs
Legal Affairs and Human Rights
Economic Affairs and Development
Social, Health and Family Affairs
Migration, Refugees and Population
Culture, Science and Education
Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs
Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
Honouring of obligations and commitments by member states of the Council of Europe (Monitoring)

27 seats

Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs



Monday 22 June 2009

☞ Morning (11.30 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Opening of the third part of the 2009 Ordinary Session**

Parliamentary Assembly President Lluís Maria de Puig opened the third part of the 2009 Ordinary Session and made an opening statement.

The Assembly began by examining credentials, including of any new members notified by national delegations, and elected Dariusz Lipiński (Poland) and Lilja Mósesdóttir (Iceland) as Vice-Presidents of the Assembly. It also dealt with changes in the membership of committees.

Adopting its agenda, the Assembly decided to hold an urgent debate on "The situation in Iran". It also decided not to include on its agenda the election of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (due to be held on Tuesday 23 June) and rejected a request for an urgent debate on the issue.

Finally, the Assembly adopted the minutes of proceedings of the Standing Committee held in Ljubljana, Slovenia (29 May 2009).

◆ **Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and the Standing Committee**

Doc. 11954 Parts I and II and Addendum
Rapporteur: Davit Harutyunyan (Armenia, EDG)

The progress report covers the discussions held and decisions reached by the Bureau and the Standing Committee since the last part-session.

◆ **Statement by Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

Following his statement, the President will answer one question from a representative of each political group in the Assembly.

Monday 22 June 2009

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-5 p.m.)

◆ **Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly presented by Samuel Žbogar, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Slovenia, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers**

Following his presentation, Mr Žbogar will answer questions from members of the Assembly. The deadline for tabling written questions is Monday 15 June at 11.30 a.m.

◆ **Statement by Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

◆ **Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and the Standing Committee (continued)**

Tuesday 23 June 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to San Marino

Doc. 11940

Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.

According to the European Convention on Human Rights, judges are elected by the Parliamentary Assembly from a list of three candidates nominated by the High Contracting Party concerned.

To assist it in making its decision, the Assembly invites its sub-committee on the election of judges to make confidential recommendations based on personal interviews with all the candidates and assessments of their CVs. The document containing these recommendations is made available only to members of the Assembly.

An absolute majority of votes cast is required in the first round of voting. If this is not achieved, a second round of voting will take place on Wednesday 24 June from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., for which a relative majority of votes will be sufficient.

Contact in the secretariat: Andrew Drzemczewski, tel. 2326.

◆ Situation in Belarus

Doc. 11939

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Andrea Rigoni (Italy, ALDE)

Opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Christos Pourgourides (Cyprus, EPP/CD)

Although Belarus is far from Council of Europe standards in the field of democracy, the rule of law and human rights, its authorities have recently taken important steps in the right direction, according to the Political Affairs Committee, releasing some opposition figures, allowing some independent media to publish in Belarus and introducing structures for consulting with civil society. To encourage this process, the Assembly should engage in a political dialogue with the authorities, while at the same time continuing to support the strengthening of democratic forces and civil society in the country.

To this end, the Bureau of the Assembly should restore Special Guest status for the Belarusian parliament, which has been suspended since 1997. At the same time, a delegation of the extra-parliamentary opposition should be invited to every Assembly session, as well as every time that the issue of Belarus appears on the agenda of the Assembly's committees.

However, the authorities need to keep making progress, according to the committee: they should immediately release any alleged political prisoners and allow the Council of Europe to investigate current and future cases, permit the exercise of political freedoms, lift obstacles to registering political parties and NGOs, and allow the opposition to hold demonstrations. They should also reform the electoral law, ensure a free media and take steps towards abolishing the death penalty. Finally, the

Special Guest status should be carefully monitored: the Bureau of the Assembly should assess – within a year – whether Belarus has made “substantive and irreversible” progress in complying with these requests, and its general degree of co-operation with the Council of Europe.

Contact in the secretariat: Sonia Sirtori, tel. 2370.

◆ **Address by Mary McAleese, President of Ireland**

Following her statement, the President will answer questions from members of the Assembly.

Tuesday 23 June 2009

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to San Marino (continued)**

Doc. 11940

Voting takes place from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.

◆ **The activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2008: reinforcing economic and democratic stability**

Doc. 11938

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Maximiano Martins (Portugal, SOC)

Economic stability helps to guarantee democratic stability, the Economic Affairs Committee recalls, and as the financial crisis has struck Council of Europe member states, funding from the EBRD has become more important than ever for those countries it supports.

The committee notes with satisfaction the sharp increase in the Bank's activities in the western Balkans, and increases in some sectors in the southern Caucasus, despite the damage to investor confidence caused by regional conflicts there. More support for private enterprise, banks and infrastructure in Moldova, and a greater volume of projects in Ukraine, are also welcome.

For the future, the EBRD needs to continue its efforts to co-operate with other banks and international financial institutions, in order to avoid overlapping activities. There is scope for greater co-ordination with the Council of Europe too, such as carrying out joint projects with the Council of Europe Development Bank, or working more closely with Council bodies active in the economic sphere, for example those fighting corruption and money-laundering. The Bank could also make greater use of Assembly reports – particularly its monitoring assessments – in steering money towards projects which reinforce the rule of law.

Statement by Thomas Mirow, President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

Contact in the secretariat: Chemavon Chahbazian, tel. 4292.

◆ **The challenges of the financial crisis to the world economic institutions**

Doc. 11944

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Kimmo Sasi (Finland, EPP/CD)

The world is in the midst of one of the worst financial and economic crises for decades, with untold social and human consequences, posing a host of new challenges to the international economic and financial institutions – the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the OECD and others. The priorities are to ensure global liquidity – which the G-20 has begun to do by tripling the resources of the IMF and boosting lending to other development banks – and to restore the international banking system to health, not least through better regulation.

The Economic Affairs Committee welcomes the IMF's loans to several Council of Europe member states, but calls on the Fund to favour early preventive advice over harsh loan conditions imposed when it is too late to do otherwise. Part of its role is to insure countries with basically sound economies against sudden capital outflows.

Only global collaboration can solve global systemic problems, the committee points out: better supervision of rating systems, a review of the international reserve system based on national currencies, and the possible creation of an international bankruptcy court. Fair and balanced trade – which shuns national protectionism – will be essential for recovery, and must remain the focus of the WTO. Meanwhile, to ensure that the least developed countries do not suffer disproportionately from the crisis, donor countries must urgently fulfil their aid promises.

Finally, to allow them to respond more effectively to the present crisis and to future turmoil, the organisations should intensify ongoing reforms designed to improve their governance, legitimacy, credibility and accountability.

Contact in the secretariat: Simon Newman, tel. 2618.

◆ **Reconsideration on substantial grounds of previously ratified credentials of the Ukrainian delegation (Rule 9 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure)**

Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Opinion of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

Twenty members of the Assembly, belonging to at least two political groups and five national delegations, have tabled a motion challenging the credentials of the Ukrainian delegation to the Assembly on the substantial grounds of "a serious violation of the basic principles of the Council of Europe". The signatories say the Ukrainian government persistently refuses to replace a missing third candidate on the list of candidates for election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights, which "undermines the credibility of the Court and is contrary to Ukraine's basic obligations" under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Under the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, a report is automatically prepared on a challenge of credentials, which shall propose in a draft resolution to confirm the credentials, to annul them, or to confirm them but deprive or suspend some of the rights of participation or representation of members of the delegation concerned.

The Legal Affairs Committee is due to approve this report during its meeting at 7 p.m. on Monday 22 June.

Contact in the secretariat: Andrew Drzemczewski, tel. 2326.

Wednesday 24 June 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to San Marino (possible second round)**

Doc. 11940

Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.

Special debate on the state of human rights in Europe:

◆ **The state of human rights in Europe: the need to eradicate impunity**

Doc. 11934

Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Herta Däubler-Gmelin (Germany, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Rapporteur: Anna Čurdová (Czech Republic, SOC)

Each year the Assembly holds a special debate which aims to assess, alternately, either the state of human rights or the state of democracy in the Council of Europe's member states. In its contribution to the third edition of this debate, dedicated to the state of human rights in Europe, the Legal Affairs Committee focuses on the theme of impunity.

From the starting point that all who carry out serious human rights violations must be held to account, the committee lists the different forms of impunity that still exist in Europe, beginning with the most serious: abuses by security forces in conflict situations, including torture and disappearances, and a failure to investigate them properly. Then there are the more insidious cases where state agents are suspected of inciting others to carry out crimes, such as the killing of journalists, and sheltering them from investigation. There are individuals who cover up rogue misdemeanours by their colleagues out of misplaced solidarity, as well as police and courts which routinely overlook racism, anti-semitism, homophobia or corruption. Finally, there is the anomaly of soldiers acting as international peacekeepers who are less accountable than when they act for their own countries.

Proper investigation is the key to ending much impunity, the committee believes, as the European Court of Human Rights often recognises in its judgements. Council of Europe mechanisms play a critical role in this – and must be refined and improved – but ultimately it is up to governments to send the political signal that impunity will not be tolerated, and to ensure law enforcers have the resources and the attitudes to do their job properly, especially when it comes to investigating violations by non-state actors.

Statement by Antonio Cassese, President of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon, former President of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and former President of the Council of Europe's Anti-Torture Committee

Contact in the secretariat: Günter Schirmer, tel. 2809.

◆ **Award ceremony for the 2009 Human Rights Prize of the Parliamentary Assembly**

In 2008 the Assembly established a Human Rights Prize to honour individuals or non-governmental organisations who have carried out "outstanding civil society action in the defence of human rights in Europe".

The first ever prize is to be awarded to the independent NGO British Irish Rights Watch, which has been monitoring the human rights dimension of the conflict in Northern Ireland, and latterly the peace process, since 1990. It was unanimously selected in March by a distinguished panel of leading figures from the world of human rights, chaired by PACE President Lluís Maria de Puig, from among fourteen nominations for the prize.

The panel praised the organisation's "courageous and outstanding work in monitoring and bringing to light human rights abuses, and its fight against impunity in Northern Ireland" as well as its vigilance in ensuring that measures taken to combat terrorism were in conformity with international human rights standards. British Irish Rights Watch researches alleged human rights violations, provides consultancy services to lawyers, organises expert testimony and sends independent observers to trials, inquests and inquiries. Much of its work is carried out by volunteers.

The President will present the prize – consisting of a trophy, a diploma and a cheque for 10,000 euros – to Helen Shaw, Chair of the Board of British Irish Rights Watch.

Contact in the secretariat: Andrew Drzemczewski, tel. 2326.

Wednesday 24 June 2009

Afternoon (3 p.m.-7.30 p.m.)

Special debate on the state of human rights in Europe (continued):

◆ The state of human rights in Europe and the progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure

Doc. 11941 and addendum

Report of the Monitoring Committee

Rapporteur: Serhiy Holovaty (Ukraine, ALDE)

In the latest of its annual reports, covering the period June 2008 to June 2009, the Monitoring Committee draws on its public assessments of almost all the eleven member states currently subject to the Assembly's monitoring procedure (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Monaco, Montenegro, the Russian Federation, Serbia and Ukraine), as well as the three countries engaged in a post-monitoring dialogue (Bulgaria, Turkey and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"), in order to create an overall picture of the human rights situation in these countries.

During the year, there were particular crises which caused concern and demanded quick reaction from the Assembly, such as the war between Georgia and Russia (where serious human rights violations were committed by both sides), the consequences of post-electoral violence in Armenia and in Moldova, and the threat to dissolve the AKP Party in Turkey.

More generally, most states have honoured their formal commitments to ratify Council of Europe human rights conventions, the committee notes with satisfaction, the "notorious exception" being Russia's failure to ratify Protocols No. 6 and 14 to the European Convention on Human Rights. Other problems in the fourteen states include judges who are not independent enough, slow court proceedings, overcrowded prisons and police ill-treatment. Threats against journalists remain a problem, as do harassment of NGOs and difficulties in organising demos in some countries. Progress is still needed on ensuring freedom of religion and conscience, and on ending discrimination.

Finally, the committee begins its second three-year cycle of reports on member states not subject to monitoring or post-monitoring dialogue, starting with the first group of eleven countries (Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France and Germany), based on assessments from the full range of Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms.

Statement by Irene Khan, Secretary General of Amnesty International

Statement by Holly Cartner, Director for Europe and Central Asia, Human Rights Watch

Contact in the secretariat: Despina Chatzivassiliou, tel. 3075.

◆ **Europe's forgotten people: protecting the human rights of long-term displaced persons**

Doc. 11942

Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

Rapporteur: John Greenway (United Kingdom, EDG)

While internally displaced people from recent conflicts often grab the headlines, some groups who were driven from their homes decades ago, by inter-ethnic violence or territorial disputes, continue to live precariously. According to the Migration Committee, there are more than 2.5 million of such "long-term" displaced people, scattered across 11 Council of Europe member states (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Georgia, Moldova, Russia, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Serbia and Turkey). They include people who fled conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh, Abkhazia and South Ossetia, Chechnya and the Balkans, as well as people who have moved from the east and south-east of Turkey, and those displaced in Cyprus more than 35 years ago.

These populations constitute "Europe's forgotten people", according to the committee. Only about a quarter have found a durable solution to their displacement, and many continue to live in destitution, leading marginalised lives with few rights, contributing to a sense of injustice which helps keep alive the "frozen conflicts" they originally fled from.

Only political solutions to the underlying conflicts will truly resolve the situation for such people, the committee points out, but in the meantime temporary or long-term integration is the best course, at least until those who wish to return are able to go safely. The committee welcomes recent policy shifts in Azerbaijan and Georgia which recognise this. The international community must play its part, through renewed efforts to find political solutions, practical aid and international peacekeeping where it is needed. Reconciliation between communities, investigating war crimes and returning or providing compensation for lost property will all help to ease that process.

But above all, Europe's long-term displaced – however long ago they moved – continue to be entitled to the highest standards of protection, including decent living conditions, access to jobs, welfare and education, and a say in their future.

Statement by Walter Kälin, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons

Contact in the secretariat: Ivi-Triin Odrats, tel. 2979.

◆ **The functioning of democratic institutions in Armenia**

Report of the Monitoring Committee

Co-rapporteurs: Georges Colombier (France, EPP/CD) and John Prescott (United Kingdom, SOC)

This report is due to be approved by the Monitoring Committee at its meeting on Monday 22 June at 1.30 p.m. in Room 11. The Speaker of the Armenian Parliament, Hovik Abrahamyan, is due to take the floor after the debate and vote.

Contact in the secretariat: Bas Klein, tel. 4992.

Thursday 25 June 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Urgent debate on the situation in Iran**

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

The committee is due to approve this report during its meeting on Tuesday 23 June at 8.30 a.m.

◆ **Address by Borut Pahor, Prime Minister of Slovenia**

Following his statement, the Prime Minister will answer questions from members of the Assembly.

Thursday 25 June 2009

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-6.30 p.m.)

◆ **The funding of public service broadcasting**

Doc. 11848

Report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Rapporteur: Markku Laukkanen (Finland, ALDE)

Doc. 11915

Opinion of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Denis MacShane (United Kingdom, SOC)

Broadcasting is changing fast, according to the Culture Committee: different media are merging and linear broadcasting is giving way to thematic channels and interactive or on-demand services, increasingly provided over the internet. Yet the ideals of public service broadcasting – high-quality programmes which provide unbiased information and reflect diverse political opinions, focusing on education, culture and other wider social needs – remain as important as ever.

Governments should authorise public service broadcasters to make use of the new technologies, including interactive and on-demand programming delivered via the internet, and find a range of ways to fund them adequately – perhaps with a mixed funding model, as for orchestras, theatres and museums. This is not an easy task: the public seems less and less willing to fund public service broadcasting, which must therefore continue to be affordable, but without distorting commercial markets, while at the same time maintaining high quality.

As before, legislators should define the broad mission, and set quality standards, but leave daily editorial and managerial decisions to the broadcasters.

Contact in the secretariat: Rüdiger Dossow, tel. 2859.

◆ **Joint debate**

Renewable energies and the environment

Doc. 11918

Report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

Rapporteur: Jean-François Le Grand (France, EPP/CD)

Dwindling fossil fuels are increasingly unable to meet the world's need for reliable, clean energy, according to the Environment Committee. A child born today, the rapporteur points out, is likely to see within their lifetime the end of oil, gas and uranium reserves. A total restructuring of the energy system is required which puts renewable forms of energy – solar, wind, hydro and geothermal – at centre stage, and the time to act is now.

Used sustainably, these sources of energy do not damage the environment and offer long-term energy security, since they can be made up of many decentralised installations involving few transnational supply networks. Governments need to take rapid action to lay the groundwork for this major political and social change, the committee urges, since any delay will only result in increasing conflict over remaining conventional resources and feed related crises on climate, poverty, water and health.

Tax breaks for renewables and ending subsidies to conventional energies will be essential, as well as reducing bureaucratic obstacles, encouraging private investment and setting aside locations for renewable energy installations. The use of "environmental accounting" to show the full cost of the environmental damage caused by conventional energy would also help.

"The nations and governments of the world still have a choice," the rapporteur warns, "but continued waiting and delaying will result in this choice being taken out of their hands."

Contact in the secretariat: Bogdan Torcatoriu, tel. 3282.

Nuclear energy and sustainable development

Doc. 11914

Report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

Rapporteur: Bill Etherington (United Kingdom, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Anna Lilliehöök (Sweden, EPP/CD)

Nuclear energy is controversial, but it currently accounts for 17 per cent of electricity generation worldwide, a proportion which seems likely to grow as many leading countries – including Council of Europe member states – have said they will extend the life of existing nuclear plants or build new ones. Russia's cutting of gas supplies to Europe in January 2009 has prompted some countries to give nuclear a fresh chance.

Nuclear energy can help to reduce global warming, because it creates fewer greenhouse gases than the burning of fossil fuels, but it cannot be considered a "sustainable" energy source, since supplies of uranium are finite. In the short to medium term, it could be of great benefit to the environment, provided the problem of safe, long-term disposal of radioactive waste can be solved. Put simply, nuclear should remain an option for Council of Europe member states – though renewable energy remains the only long-term solution once both fossil and nuclear fuels are used up.

In the meantime, steps should be taken to make civil nuclear power an international enterprise that is safe, transparent and fair: know-how and training should be shared globally, international infrastructure should be created – for example IAEA-run "international fuel recycling centres" – the problem of nuclear waste must be tackled head-on, and the rules governing the nuclear energy market should be opened up. Finally, public opinion must be engaged through transparent information on the risks and benefits of this source of energy, and parliamentary debates.

Contact in the secretariat: Bogdan Torcatoriu, tel. 3282.

The Joint Committee, which is the organ of co-ordination between the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers, meets at 6.30 p.m., or at the end of the sitting, in Room 5. Items on the agenda include follow-up to the Communication by Mr Žbogar, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, before the Assembly on 22 June 2009; the situation in Belarus; and "Partner for Democracy" status with the Assembly.

Friday 26 June 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Establishment of a “Partner for democracy” status with the Parliamentary Assembly**

Doc. 11913

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Luc van den Brande (Belgium, EPP/CD)

The Council of Europe has long sought to increase co-operation with countries in its neighbouring regions – such as the southern Mediterranean, the Middle East or central Asia – with the ultimate aim of promoting its values. The Assembly already has good working contacts with the parliaments of Algeria, Kazakhstan, Morocco and Tunisia, as well as with the Palestinian Legislative Council, and several of these have expressed interest in upgrading these contacts.

Just as, in the early 1990s, the Assembly’s partnerships with parliamentarians were key to bringing democratic change to eastern and central Europe, the Political Affairs Committee believes similar partnerships in neighbouring regions could help promote parliamentary democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law in the countries concerned.

It proposes to create a new “Partner for democracy” status for institutional co-operation with parliaments of non-member states in neighbouring regions wishing to benefit from the Assembly’s experience. Parliaments requesting the new status should declare their aspiration to embrace Council values, promise to hold free and fair elections and pledge to work towards abolishing the death penalty. They should agree to seek the Assembly’s help in their legislative work and encourage their country’s authorities to join Council of Europe conventions open to them. They should also report regularly on their progress.

“Partner for democracy” delegations would be similar to those for Special Guest status – being able to take part in debates of the Assembly, but without the right to vote – and should respect the principle of gender equality. National parliaments of all southern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries would be eligible to apply, as well as central Asian countries participating in the OSCE, but requests from other parliaments could be considered if the Assembly so decides.

Contact in the secretariat: Pavel Chevtchenko, tel. 3835.

◆ **History teaching in conflict and post-conflict areas**

Doc. 11919

Report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Rapporteur: Cecilia Keaveney (Ireland, ALDE)

The Culture Committee begins from the conviction that history – especially contemporary history – is often a hostage to politics. The right approach can contribute to understanding and tolerance, but the wrong one can reinforce division and even lead to violence. Conventional history, notably in areas which have recently seen conflict, can emphasise a single interpretation of events as “the truth”, usually a politically expedient one. But the finest history, which is badly needed in such areas, welcomes and celebrates many views and interpretations, provided they are based on factual evidence.

The committee has a host of suggestions for improving history teaching in Europe: new approaches to learning about "the other"; a greater focus on primary sources, including minority views; the use of modern technologies, especially broadband internet; work in smaller groups, outside the classroom or in the field; the use of gentle humour; support for historical research, especially when it concerns multilateral commissions looking into disputed contemporary history. Local history and learning about cultural heritage can play an important role too.

History teachers need to know their subject, but also need training in how to get it across in ways which inspire their pupils. For example, primary school kids could be encouraged to keep diaries tracking their own reactions to contemporary events, for joint comparison later.

The very best history teaching leaves young people not with lists of facts or settled prejudices, but with mobile, critical minds that can recognise distortion and stereotype when they see it, and are alive to the richness and diversity of human experience.

Contact in the secretariat: Joao Ary, tel. 2112.

◆ **The urgent need to combat so-called "honour crimes"**

Doc. 11943

Report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Rapporteur: John Austin (United Kingdom, SOC)

More and more women in Europe and worldwide, especially in patriarchal and fundamentalist societies, are affected by so-called "honour crimes", according to the Equal Opportunities Committee. These crimes can take various forms, such as "honour killing", assault, torture, restrictions on free association, imprisonment, and interference in the choice of a spouse or partner.

So-called "honour crimes" constitute a serious violation of fundamental human rights. According to the committee, no tradition or culture can justify these acts. Member states are asked to put into effect national action plans to combat honour crimes and violence against women in general. They should educate both girls and boys on fundamental human rights and on respecting their partners, engage in a dialogue with religious authorities and invite them to co-operate in the prevention of so-called "honour crimes", conduct awareness-raising campaigns, protect and support victims or potential victims, as well as teach the police and judiciary about the complexity of these crimes.

The Assembly also asks the national parliaments of Council of Europe member states to make so-called "honour crimes" criminal offences and apply adequate penalties. They should also provide equitable compensation for victims.

Finally the Assembly calls on the Committee of Ministers to ensure that all perpetrators of such crimes are held responsible. It should also include so-called "honour crimes" in the future Council of Europe convention to combat violence against women and domestic violence.

Contact in the secretariat: Jannick Devaux, tel. 3503.

◆ **Joint debate**

Draft Additional Protocol to the European Charter of Local Self-Government on the right to participate in the affairs of a local authority

Doc. 11935 and 11950

Report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

Rapporteur: Miljenko Dorić (Croatia, ALDE)

The European Charter of Local Self-Government is the Council of Europe's flagship treaty governing the work of local authorities, laying down their responsibilities, tasks and structures – and proposing rules and procedures which guarantee their independence, legal protection and financing.

This protocol seeks to boost the active and direct involvement of citizens in local politics by creating a formal "right to participate in the affairs of a local authority". Under its terms, citizens should be able to stand or vote in local elections, must be involved in consultative processes, referendums and petitions, have access to official documents, and should expect to have their complaints dealt with promptly and efficiently.

The Environment Committee is fully in favour of involving citizens as much as possible in the decisions which affect them – especially at a time when interest in local politics appears to be declining – and supports the protocol wholeheartedly, though it regrets that the "right to participate" is not defined more explicitly.

Contact in the secretariat: Agnès Nollinger, tel. 2288.

Draft Protocol No. 3 to the European Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities concerning Euroregional co-operation groupings (ECGs)

Doc. 11936 and 11951

Report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

Rapporteur: Miljenko Dorić (Croatia, ALDE)

Encouraging transfrontier contacts has been a consistent aim of the Council of Europe, not least through the entry into force, in 1981, of the Outline Convention on Transfrontier Co-operation between Territorial Communities or Authorities. The treaty has had an effect, with increasing numbers of initiatives which twin municipalities, develop transport links across frontiers or put in place jointly-managed policies on health or other matters.

The principle of "Euroregions" is already familiar to European Union countries, allowing local and regional authorities to co-operate under public or private law, and more than 70 such groupings have already been set up across the continent. This protocol allows all Council of Europe countries to create or take part in such groupings, using a similar model which lays down a legal and administrative framework for creating and running them.

The Environment Committee fully supports the protocol, and invites the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities to help draft model legislation to enable Euroregions to take off in the wider Europe.

Contact in the secretariat: Agnès Nollinger, tel. 2288.

◆ **Closure of the third part of the 2009 Ordinary Session**

Practical information

1. Meetings of committees and political groups

The list of meetings held by the committees and the other organs of the Assembly (Bureau, political groups, etc.) appears in the notice paper (*bulletin*) published before each sitting.

Unless a committee decides otherwise, committee meetings are not public.

Meetings of political groups take place on Monday morning and late afternoon as well as Wednesday morning.

2. Languages

The official languages of the Assembly are English and French. German, Italian and Russian are working languages. Speeches made in plenary session in any of these five languages are interpreted simultaneously into the other official and working languages. Members may, however, speak in languages other than English, French, German, Italian and Russian, provided that their delegation arranges for interpretation into one of the official or working languages. During sittings this is generally the case for Spanish, Dutch, Portuguese and Greek.

3. Assembly documents

The following documents are available in French and English at the document counter (on the first floor, to the right of the top of the main staircase, near lift No. IV).

Official documents

The main official documents are:

Reports: All items on the agenda are debated on the basis of a report by one of the Assembly's committees (with the exception of current affairs debates, elections, appointments, statements by guest speakers and communications from and questions to the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe).

Committee reports comprise one or more draft texts for adoption (recommendations, opinions, resolutions) and an explanatory memorandum prepared by the rapporteur. Only draft texts can be amended and adopted by the Assembly.

Amendments: Amendments to draft texts must be tabled in keeping with the relevant rules of procedure, particularly Rule 34 (see section 4 below). They are distributed at the document counter. They must be signed by at least five Representatives or Substitutes, unless they are being submitted on behalf of a committee seized for report or opinion.

Agenda: For each part-session the Bureau prepares a draft agenda listing the sittings at which the items will be examined. **The draft agenda** is made available to members of the Assembly two weeks before the opening of the part-session. The Assembly is required to adopt the draft agenda

(Rule 26.4 of the Rules of Procedure). A member may propose an amendment to the draft agenda drawn up by the Bureau. The adoption of such a motion requires a majority of the votes cast (Rule 26.5). Once adopted, the agenda can be altered only by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast.

Once it has been approved by the Assembly at the first sitting of the part-session, the agenda is published (Rule 26) and made available to the members at the document counter.

Minutes of proceedings: Generally, after each sitting of the Assembly, the **minutes of proceedings** are produced. They list the Assembly's decisions and record speakers' names, the results of votes on texts and amendments, and points of order raised. At the start of the sitting the President submits the minutes of proceedings of earlier sittings to the Assembly for approval. If the minutes of proceedings are objected to, their approval may be postponed to the following sitting, at which the President may put to the Assembly any necessary modification (see Rule 30 of the Rules of Procedure).

Report of debates: A **provisional report of debates** is issued after each sitting. The French version of the provisional report (pink pages) contains the full text of all speeches made in French and a summary in French of speeches made in other languages. The English version (yellow pages) contains the full text of speeches in English and summaries in English of speeches in other languages. Speeches in German or Italian are also reported verbatim in a separate publication (green pages). Speakers may make corrections to the provisional report of debates within 24 hours of publication.

Representatives and Substitutes who were entered on the list of speakers and present in the Chamber but were unable to speak because of lack of time may hand in their typewritten texts for inclusion in the report of debates. They should do so within 24 hours of the end of the debate concerned at the Table Office (Room 1083).

Adopted texts: The texts adopted by the Assembly are also published after each sitting, separately in English (yellow pages) and French (pink pages).

The texts adopted by the Assembly are:

- Recommendations (proposals addressed by the Assembly to the Committee of Ministers, for implementation by that Committee or the governments);
- Opinions (addressed to the Committee of Ministers);
- Resolutions (embodying a decision by the Assembly on a question of substance which it is empowered to put into effect, a point of view for which it alone is responsible, or a question of form, transmission, execution or procedure);

The other official documents (Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure) are:

- reports, communications, requests for an opinion or further consideration transmitted by the Committee of Ministers;
- questions addressed to the Committee of Ministers;
- communications from the Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
- reports of international organisations;
- written declarations.

Other documents

Twice a day a "**notice paper**" is produced, setting out the agenda for the sittings of the day. It also contains other useful information relevant to the proceedings and procedure.

For each part-session the following lists are published:

- List of Representatives
- List of Substitutes
- List of national delegations
- List of the Secretariat officials, giving office locations and contact telephone numbers for the part-session.

The latest edition of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly is published in January 2009 in two parts, the Rules and complementary texts in one part, and the Statute of the Council of Europe in another part. They are available in bilingual versions (English/French). A separate update was published in April 2009.

4. Tabling amendments

Members who wish to table amendments or sub-amendments to the draft texts before the Assembly should submit them to the Table Office (Room 1083). Amendments and sub-amendments must be **signed by at least five Representatives or Substitutes**, unless they have been submitted on behalf of the committee submitting the report or an opinion.

Under the provisions on the organisation of debates (pages 100-102 of the Rules of Procedure), the **time limits for tabling amendments** are the following (where appropriate the Bureau may decide to change these limits, in particular for urgent debates or debates on general policy):

- for debates on the afternoon of Monday 22 June: Monday 22 June at 12 noon;
- for debates on Tuesday 23 June: Monday 22 June at 4 p.m.;
- for all other debates (except urgent debates, unforeseen debates or as otherwise indicated on the agenda): 23 and a half hours before the opening of the sitting at which the debate is to begin.

Sub-amendments must be tabled at least one hour before the scheduled end of the sitting preceding that in which the debate begins.

The procedure for tabling, examining and voting on amendments and sub-amendments is set out in Rule 34 of the Rules of Procedure.

5. Motions for resolutions and recommendations

Motions for resolutions and recommendations must be signed by ten or more Representatives or Substitutes from at least five national delegations (Rule 24.2). The President decides which motions are admissible.

Any motion considered admissible is printed and distributed as soon as possible. The Bureau then decides whether it should be referred to one or more committees, or forwarded to one or more committees for information, or that no further action should be taken. The Bureau's decision must then be ratified by the Assembly.

For motions tabled during a part-session, the Bureau has decided that only those motions which have been tabled by **12 noon on the Tuesday of a part-session** will be examined by the Bureau meeting after the part-session.

A document may be referred to only one committee for report but to any other committee for opinion (Rule 25.2). The opinion of the latter concerns the report of the former committee. The report concerned must therefore be made available to the committee whose opinion has been sought in good time for it to prepare its opinion. Committee opinions may be presented orally or in writing. An opinion presented in writing must contain a chapter at the beginning entitled "Conclusions of the committee" and an explanatory memorandum by the rapporteur (Rule 49.3 of the Rules of Procedure).

6. Written declarations

Written declarations may be tabled provided that they:

- do not exceed 200 words;
- are on subjects within the competence of the Council of Europe;
- are signed by at least twenty Representatives or Substitutes belonging to four national delegations and two political groups.

They are neither referred to a committee nor debated in the Assembly (Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure).

Any representative or Substitute may add his signature to such a declaration, in which case the declaration will be distributed again two weeks after the end of the part-session, with the names of all the members who signed it.

A written declaration which has not received any new signatures before the opening of the following part-session is closed to further signature.

7. Opinions of the Assembly (to the Committee of Ministers)

According to the Statute of the Council of Europe, or to other texts of a statutory character, the Committee of Ministers seeks the Assembly's opinion on such matters as the accession of new member states, draft conventions or the Council of Europe's budget. These requests for opinions are debated in the Assembly, following which the Assembly votes on the opinion to be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers (Rule 57).

8. Changes in the membership of national delegations or committees

Members of the Assembly are appointed for the whole Ordinary Session. Following parliamentary elections, the national parliament concerned or other competent authority shall make appointments to the Assembly within six months of the elections. If the national parliament cannot make all such appointments in time for the opening of a new Ordinary Session, it may decide, for a period of not more than six months after the election, to be represented in the Assembly by members of the existing delegation (Rule 10.2 and 3).

Should any seat on a national delegation fall vacant in the course of a session as a result of death or resignation, the president of the national parliament concerned, or the Minister for Foreign Affairs, presents the credentials of the member who is to fill the vacant seat to the

President of the Parliamentary Assembly, who submits them to the Assembly or the Standing Committee for ratification at the first sitting or meeting following their receipt (Rule 6.4).

The chairperson of a national delegation informs the President of the Assembly of any proposed change(s) in committee membership concerning that delegation's members. The President of the Assembly submits the proposed change(s) to the Assembly, the Standing Committee or, failing that, the Bureau for ratification (Rule 43.6).

9. Requests for debates under urgent procedure or current affairs debates

At the request of the Committee of Ministers, of the committee concerned, of one or more political groups, or of twenty or more Representatives or Substitutes, a debate may be held on an item which has not been placed on the Assembly's draft agenda. Requests for debates under urgent procedure must be addressed to the President of the Assembly. The President submits them to the Bureau, which makes a proposal to the Assembly. The adoption of urgent procedure requires a two-thirds majority of the votes cast (Rule 50.4).

An urgent debate is based on a written report and gives rise to a vote, whereas a current affairs debate is not based on a report.

At least twenty members, or one political group or national delegation may request a current affairs debate (Rule 52) on a subject which is not on the Assembly's draft agenda. The request must be made in writing to the President of the Assembly in time for the last meeting of the Bureau before the opening of the part-session. The possible choice between several requests is made by the Bureau, a decision which needs to be endorsed by the Assembly. A current affairs debate may not exceed one and a half hours. The debate shall be opened by one of the members who requested it, chosen by the Bureau. The first speaker has ten minutes speaking time, other speakers five. Although there is no vote on any text, the Bureau of the Assembly may subsequently propose that the subject be referred to the appropriate committee for report.

10. Electronic voting, notification of Substitutes, list of speakers, and quorum

All votes in the Assembly, except elections, take place by electronic voting.

11. Voting cards

Voting cards issued to all members are simultaneously used for identification and voting.

Distribution of voting cards is ensured by the Badge Service of the Council of Europe. In principle, this distribution is organised via secretaries of each national delegation. Members who do not have their card (in case a card has been lost or forgotten, or when the Parliamentary Assembly database does not contain the member's photo) should present themselves at the welcome Protocol desk at the main entrance of the Palais de l'Europe in order to receive their card. Staff of the Badge Service, before delivering a new card, will invite the member to present his or her identification document. If a third and consecutive card is issued to the same member during the same calendar year for whatever reason, loss or otherwise, the national delegation will be required to pay the cost (6 euros per card).

Voting cards as distributed by the Badge Service do not give an automatic right to vote. In order to enjoy such a right, the member's card has to be validated. This operation will be carried out by the Assembly Secretariat.

12. Notification of Substitutes

In principle all Representatives at the opening of the first sitting (on Monday, at 11.30 a.m.) have their cards validated, but not Substitutes unless the Secretariat of the Assembly is properly informed about substitutions. Therefore secretaries of national delegations have the duty to inform the Secretariat of the Assembly about all cases of substitution. If this is not done, Substitutes attending the sitting do not have speaking and voting rights.

Notice of substitutions has to be given before the opening of the sitting concerned (if possible by the previous day and at the latest before 8.30 a.m. for a morning sitting and before 1 p.m. for an afternoon sitting). For the first sitting on Monday at 11.30 a.m., the deadline is 10 a.m. This notification, including the names of Substitutes, the names of Representatives to be substituted and the length of substitution, must be given in writing for each sitting to the Secretariat of the Assembly (Beejul Tanna, Room 1074, fax during session weeks +33 3 88 41 27 27, fax outside session weeks +33 3 88 41 27 33).

If the Substitute is replacing the Representative for one or more consecutive sittings, the substitution for each sitting must be notified. Substitutions are never carried automatically over to the following sitting.

When the correct notification has been given, Substitutes will have their voting cards validated. At the same time, cards of Representatives who are to be replaced by Substitutes will become invalid, preventing them from speaking in the debate and voting, including in elections.

13. Register of attendance

Members shall continue to sign the register of attendance before entering the Chamber for a sitting (Rules 11.2 and 39.1). A duly designated Substitute will find his or her name in the register next to the name of the Representative for whom he or she is substituting. If, in the register of attendance, no name is found next to the Representative's name, it means that no substitution was notified for the Representative for that particular sitting and therefore only the Representative is authorised to speak in the debate and vote.

All members of the Assembly – Representatives and Substitutes as well as Observers – have access to the Chamber at any time of the sitting, regardless of their speaking and voting rights. Therefore, all members, even those who are not authorised to speak in the debate or vote, are invited to sign the register of attendance if they attend the sitting.

14. Speakers' register

Members who wish to speak in a debate must enter their names on the list of speakers. They may do this by post in advance of the part-session, or in person during the part-session at the Table Office (Room 1083). The list is closed one hour before the scheduled end of the previous sitting, except in the case of the first sitting of a part-session, when the deadline is one and a half hours before the start of the sitting (i.e. at 10 a.m.). It should be noted that in any one part-session members may enter their names on the list for a maximum of **five debates** but may take the floor **not more than three times** (this limit does not apply to members appointed as political group spokespersons or as rapporteurs). A Substitute whose name has not been notified to the secretariat before a sitting cannot participate in the debate.

The order of speakers on the list for each debate is determined according to criteria set by the Bureau and can be found in the Rules of Procedure.

Speaking time is limited to a total of 13 minutes for committee rapporteurs (to present the report and to reply to the debate) and 3 minutes for rapporteurs for opinion, to present the opinion or to reply to the debate. Other speakers on the list normally have a maximum of 5 minutes, although this may be reduced depending on the number of speakers on the list. At the start of each sitting the President announces the speaking arrangements.

Only authorised members – i.e. Representatives or their duly appointed Substitutes – may speak in debates or submit questions for oral reply to the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers or to guest speakers. The list of speakers is verified accordingly.

15. Questions to invited guest speakers

For most invited guest speakers, the draft agenda indicates whether there is the possibility for members to ask questions. Where there is that possibility, members are encouraged to register their names with the Table Office as soon as the draft agenda is published and the name of the guest speaker appears, unless the draft agenda specifies that there is only one question from each political group. Members are invited to submit the subject of their question.

For the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, the name of the member wishing to ask a written question is registered if accompanied by the full written text of the question. These questions must be tabled at least one week before the opening of the part-session. This deadline is specified in the draft agenda. The written questions to the Chairperson are published as an Assembly document. In accordance with the practice established at the last part-sessions, these written questions will receive a written reply from the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers. The replies will be published in the report of the sitting.

Pursuant to Rule 58.2, the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers has indicated that he is prepared to give an oral reply to spontaneous questions at the end of his address. Rule 58.2 of the Rules of Procedure states, however, that "No Representative or Substitute may put more than one oral or written question to the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers at any one part-session." Members may therefore register on one of the two lists by completing and returning the appropriate form (either "written question for reply" or "spontaneous question").

Although there is no formal deadline as such for all "spontaneous" questions, members have an interest in registering their names as early as possible, as there is usually not enough time to answer all questions.

16. Electronic voting

While they are sitting in the Chamber, members are invited to keep their voting cards inserted in the voting terminals. However, when they leave, they should take their cards with them.

Voting cards should be inserted correctly into the terminals (the photo side of the member's card is facing the President's table; then the card is pushed down until a "click" is heard). A card correctly inserted is signalled by its number being displayed on a small screen in the voting terminal. Any malfunctioning or error message displayed on the voting terminal screen should be immediately reported to the Secretariat present in the Chamber.

The opening of a vote by the President is confirmed by a small green light on the voting terminal.

After the opening of a vote, members should vote by putting their hands into the small booth of the voting terminal and by pressing one of the three voting buttons (stickers which are on the top of voting terminals are put there only for information in order to indicate the positions

of the "for", "abstention" and "against" buttons). The chosen vote is confirmed by a coloured light on the terminal: green ("for"), white ("abstention") or red ("against").

Rule 39.9 indicates that a member cannot modify his or her vote after the voting is closed.

The names of Assembly members who participate in votes, as well as how they voted in each case, are published on the Assembly's website.

17. Quorum

The Assembly may deliberate, decide the orders of the day, approve the minutes of proceedings, decide upon procedural motions, and agree to adjourn, whatever the number of Representatives present.

All votes other than votes by roll-call shall be valid whatever the number of members voting, unless, before the voting has begun, the President has been requested to ascertain whether there is a quorum. At least one sixth of the Representatives authorised to vote, belonging to at least five national delegations, must vote in favour of the request. To ascertain whether there is a quorum, the President invites Representatives to mark their presence in the Chamber using the electronic voting system.

The quorum is one third of the number of Representatives of the Assembly authorised to vote (Rule 41.3).

A vote by roll-call shall not be valid unless one third of the Representatives authorised to vote took part. The President may decide to ascertain whether there is a quorum before proceeding to a vote by roll-call.

In the absence of a quorum, the vote shall be postponed until the next sitting or, on a motion from the Chair, until a subsequent sitting.

18. Majorities required

A majority of two-thirds of the votes cast is required for the adoption of a draft recommendation or a draft opinion to the Committee of Ministers, for the adoption of urgent procedure, for an alteration to the order of business, for the setting up of a committee and for the fixing of the date for the opening or resumption of Ordinary Sessions. For the adoption of a draft resolution and for any other decision, a majority of the votes cast is required, in the case of a tie the question being rejected.

19. Mobile phones

Members are reminded that mobile phones must be switched off at all times in the Chamber and during committee meetings.

Directory

Secretariat of the Assembly

Secretary General of the Assembly
Mateo Sorinas, office 6207, tel. 2115, mateo.sorinas@coe.int

Head of the Office of the Secretary General of the Assembly
Kjell Torbiörn, office 6196, tel. 2120, kjell.torbiorn@coe.int

Secretary to the Secretary General of the Assembly
Christine Willkomm, office 6211, tel. 2978, christine.willkomm@coe.int

Director General
Wojciech Sawicki, office 6217, tel. 3630, wojciech.sawicki@coe.int

Director, Political and Legal Affairs Directorate
Jane Dinsdale, office 6201, tel. 2328, jane.dinsdale@coe.int

Director, General Services Directorate
Horst Schade, office 6167, tel. 2075, horst.schade@coe.int

Private Office of the President

Head of the Private Office *ad interim*
Bonnie Theophilova, office 1064, tel. 3092, bonnie.theophilova@coe.int

Deputy Head of the Private Office
Aiste Ramanauskaite, office 1079, tel. 3117, aiste.ramanauskaite@coe.int

Secretariat of the President and of the Head of Private Office
Janice Ludwig, office 1070, tel. 2094, janice.ludwig@coe.int

Table Office

(Speakers' lists, questions to invited guests and amendments)

Head of the Table Office
Alfred Sixto, office 6.173, tel. 2244, alfred.sixto@coe.int

John Bengener, office 1067, tel. 4667, john.bengener@coe.int
Remi Schenberg, office 1073, tel. 3936, remi.schenberg@coe.int

Amendments
Koen Muylle, office 1083, tel. 4283, koen.muylle@coe.int

Notification of substitutes
Beejul Tanna, office 1074, tel. 3273, beejul.tanna@coe.int

Communication Unit of the Assembly

Head of Unit
Micaela Catalano, office 6187, tel. 2595, micaela.catalano@coe.int

Francesc Ferrer, office 6189, tel. 3250, francesc.ferrer@coe.int
Angus Macdonald, office 6166, tel. 3439, angus.macdonald@coe.int
Nathalie Bargellini, office 6164, tel. 2282, nathalie.bargellini@coe.int

Secretariat
Catherine Becarmin, office 6170, tel. 3193, catherine.becarmin@coe.int

Secretaries of political groups

Group of the European People's Party:
Denise O'Hara, office 5141/5143, tel. 2676, denise.ohara@coe.int

Socialist Group:
Marlène Albanese, office 5099/5101, tel. 2675, marlene.albanese@coe.int

European Democrat Group:
Tom van Dijck, office 5117, tel. 2677, tom.van-dijck@coe.int

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe:
Peter Kallenberger, office 5081, tel. 2682, peter.kallenberger@coe.int

Group of the Unified European Left:
Hélène de Assis, office 5158/60, tel. 3684, helena.deassis@coe.int

Secretary General

Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Terry Davis, office 3003, tel. 2050, terry.davis@coe.int

Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, office 3011, tel. 2382, maud.deboer-buquicchio@coe.int

Spokesperson and media relations
Matjaz Gruden, office 3012a, tel. 2118, matjaz.gruden@coe.int

Directorate of Communication

Director
Seda Pumpyanskaya, office 0.015B, tel. 3162, seda.pumpyanskaya@coe.int

Audiovisual Service, tel. 3500.

Protocol

Head of Protocol
Rafael Benitez, office 0149, tel. 3479, rafael.benitez@coe.int

Services

Internet access

Free Wi-Fi access is available in most areas of the Palais building. Terminals with free broadband access are also available in the lobby of the debating chamber and outside the second floor meeting rooms. The Assembly's website and the Council of Europe portal, including other language portals, can be accessed here.

Badges

Wearing badges is compulsory for admittance to the Chamber. Voting cards are used as ID badges. Contact the Protocol desk in the entrance hall.

Bars and restaurants

Parliamentarians' Bar: 1st floor, opposite the Chamber, open from 8.30 a.m. to the end of the sitting. Restaurant Bleu: ground floor, for official meals (tel. 3704 for reservations). Palais cafeteria: ground floor, open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Palais self-service: ground floor, lunch from 12 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Bank

Société Générale, in the entrance hall, open from 8.15 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., tel. 7060. A cash dispenser is located opposite the cafeteria (ground floor).

Bus

Free shuttle service departing from Allée Spach to the railway station via downtown (and vice versa). Badges must be shown. Time schedules are available at the reception desk.

Bookshop

Librairie Klébér: In the entrance hall, open from 9.30 a.m. to 12.45 p.m. and from 1.30 p.m. to 5.45 p.m., tel. 3712.

Philatelic agency

Council of Europe stamps and, since 1949, philatelic envelopes commemorating every session of the Parliamentary Assembly, tel. 03 88 35 08 88.

Post office

La Poste: in the entrance hall, open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., tel. 3463.

Medical centre

Entrance hall, open from 8.30 a.m. to the end of the sitting, tel. 2442.

Newsagent

Just off the entrance hall, open from 7.30 a.m. to 7.00 p.m., tel. 3549.

City of Strasbourg information desk

The City of Strasbourg is represented at the reception desk in the entrance hall, providing lists of hotels, restaurants and local events, flight/train times etc, tel. 3838. For accommodation or transport, call 03 88 52 28 38.