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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



THE INFORMATION GUIDE FOR PLENARY SESSIONS OF PACE

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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)



185

Socialist Group (SOC)



103

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)



93

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 28 September 2009

☞ Morning (11.30 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ Opening of the fourth part of the 2009 Ordinary Session

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

The Assembly dealt with new members notified by national delegations, as well as changes in the membership of committees, and elected Dzhema Grozdanova as its Vice-President with respect to Bulgaria, and Juan Moscoso del Prado Hernández as its Vice-President with respect to Spain.

The Assembly also decided to reject a request to withdraw the election of the Secretary General from the agenda. Following a challenge of the still unratified credentials of the Moldovan parliamentary delegation – on the procedural grounds that the delegation was not composed so as to ensure a fair representation of the political parties or groups in the parliament – the Assembly decided to debate this matter on Wednesday evening.

The Assembly also decided to debate on Thursday morning a request made by 72 members of the Assembly to reconsider, on substantive grounds, the previously ratified credentials of the Russian parliamentary delegation.

Finally, the Assembly decided to hold a current affairs debate on “The situation of human rights defenders and the increasing violence in the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation” on Wednesday afternoon.

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

Doc. 12028 Parts I and II, and addendum
Rapporteur: Mátyás Eörsi (Hungary, ALDE)

The progress report covers the discussions held and decisions reached by the Bureau and the Standing Committee since the last part-session, including reports on the Assembly's observation of:

- the parliamentary elections in **Albania** (28 June 2009)
Rapporteur: Corien W. A. Jonker (Netherlands, EPP/CD)
- the parliamentary elections in **Bulgaria** (5 July 2009)
Rapporteur: Tadeusz Iwiński (Poland, SOC)
- the early parliamentary elections in **Moldova** (29 July 2009)
Rapporteur: Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG)

Monday 28 September 2009

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-5 p.m.)

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

◆ **The promotion of internet and online media services appropriate for minors**

Doc. 11924

Report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Rapporteur: József Kozma (Hungary, SOC)

Twenty years after the world wide web was first conceived, the internet has become an integral part of human culture, fundamentally re-shaping society – not least among children and young people, for whom the online world has created astonishing new opportunities to learn, be creative and interact. Yet they face risks too: distorted perceptions when real life is replaced with so-called “virtual reality”, the consequences of intimate details of private life entering the public domain, and unsupervised access to violent or pornographic content.

Governments have a duty to support parents and teachers in helping children to cope with these risks, the Culture Committee believes. They should raise awareness of the pitfalls, provide guidance on how to avoid them, and define minimum standards aimed at both service providers and users, for example on filtering out inappropriate content.

Technical solutions, such as filters, content rating systems and restricted networks or so-called “walled gardens”, can play a role, but the most effective approach is widespread education on net safety, the committee believes. Those who produce or make available illegal content should also be fully prosecuted in accordance with the Council of Europe’s Cybercrime Convention.

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

Tuesday 29 September 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Election of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe**

Doc. 11957

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

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe is elected by the Assembly for a five-year term from among at least two candidates submitted by the Committee of Ministers. Two candidates, proposed by their respective governments, have been submitted to the Assembly by the Committee of Ministers, in alphabetical order: Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz (Poland) and Thorbjørn Jagland (Norway).

The ballot is due to take place between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. in the area behind the Presidential rostrum. Representatives or substitutes duly notified to the Table Office and with the right to vote in the Chamber for the morning's sitting are eligible to vote in the election. The result of the vote will be announced by the President in the plenary Chamber at 3 p.m. on the same day.

An absolute majority of votes cast is required in the first round. If no candidate obtains an absolute majority, a second round of voting will take place on Wednesday 30 September from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., for which only a simple majority is required.

◆ **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 21 September at 11.30 a.m.

◆ **The war between Georgia and Russia: one year after**

Doc. 12010

Report of the Monitoring Committee

Co-rapporteurs: Luc Van den Brande (Belgium, EPP/CD) and Mátyás Eörsi (Hungary, ALDE)

Opinion of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

The Monitoring Committee deplores the fact that, one year after the tragic outbreak of the war between Georgia and Russia, little tangible progress has been achieved in addressing the consequences of this war, and that, in several areas, the situation has actually regressed. While Georgia has complied with most, albeit not all, demands of the Assembly, Russia has not complied with most of the key demands placed upon it.

The committee cannot accept the apparent reluctance of both Georgia and Russia to investigate in a credible manner serious allegations of violations of human rights committed during and after the war, and encourages the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into possible war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by either side.

Having taken note of Russia's argument that its non-compliance with the demands of the Assembly is the result of its diverging position with regard to the status of the two break-away regions (South Ossetia and Abkhazia), the committee argues, for its part, that most demands have no relation to the status issue and therefore it cannot understand that Russia has failed to comply even with them. It therefore considers that Russia's non-compliance with the Assembly's demands underscores its lack of political will to address the consequences of the war in a manner incumbent on a member state of the Council of Europe.

The report concludes by strongly urging the Russian authorities, before the end of the year, to give unrestricted access to EU monitors to both South Ossetia and Abkhazia, grant freedom of movement to Georgian civilians across the administrative boundaries of the two breakaway regions, recognise the right of return of internally displaced persons from this conflict and initiate credible investigations into alleged acts of ethnic cleansing.

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

Tuesday 29 September 2009

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **The challenges posed by climate change**

Doc. 12002

Report of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs
Rapporteurs: John Prescott (United Kingdom, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development
Rapporteur: Luuk Blom (Netherlands, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population
Rapporteur: Christopher Chope (United Kingdom, EDG)

According to the UN's expert scientific panel, global warming is unequivocal: as a result of human activity, carbon dioxide levels far exceed the normal range, hotting up the planet. Unless global temperatures can be held at less than 2°C above their pre-industrial level, the scientists say, there is a risk of "irreversible and potentially catastrophic consequences", and the window of opportunity to meet that target is closing fast. There needs to be a 50-85 per cent reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050, with mid-term targets of 20-40 per cent by 2020.

Everyone agrees that global action is vital, yet so far there is little sign of consensus among the representatives of the world's nations, who are gathering in Copenhagen in December, on how to share the burden of cuts. The developed countries, which are responsible for most past emissions, must take a strong lead, with deep and early cuts that show a low-carbon economy is possible and affordable. The negotiators should strive to achieve a political commitment to social and environmental equity by 2050: a limit of two tonnes of carbon dioxide per person per year for all countries.

Copenhagen must come up with an ambitious, binding global agreement – led by the industrialised countries – and a clear vision of a future low-carbon world, according to the committee. The money and the know-how to achieve this exist, all that is needed is the political will. The planet has less than a decade to radically change course, which means that urgent action is needed right now.

Statement by Rajendra K. Pachauri, Chairman of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

Contact in the secretariat: Dana Karanjac, tel. 4877.

◆ **Cultural education: the promotion of cultural knowledge, creativity and intercultural understanding through education**

Doc. 11989

Report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Rapporteur: Christine Muttonen (Austria, SOC)

Everyone has the right to education, but access to the vast treasure-house of world art, music and literature – and, even better, the chance to communicate, play, sing, dance, act, draw or paint – can be of particular benefit to an individual, stimulating their creativity, social skills and integration into society, according to the Culture Committee.

For that reason, schools should ensure that culture and the arts have an important place in general education, and are taught well, with plenty of opportunities for individual self-expression. Literacy enables an individual to fully take part in a democratic society, while art and music have been shown to be helpful for those with difficulties speaking, reading or writing. Museums and cultural institutions, for their part, should try to ensure as vivid and diverse a cultural landscape as possible, especially in areas where there are political tensions.

Education ministers across Europe should make cultural education mandatory, raise teaching standards, and consider bringing artists into schools, the committee suggests. Among other things, they should also study and make allowances for differences between boys and girls in cultural education, and make a point of creating opportunities through the arts for kids from disadvantaged, minority or migrant backgrounds.

Statement by Kurt Masur, conductor

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

◆ **The war between Georgia and Russia: one year after (continued)**

Wednesday 30 September 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Election of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
(possible second round)**

Doc. 11957

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

If no candidate obtains an absolute majority in the first round of voting, a second round will take place, for which only a simple majority is required.

◆ **The activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and
Development (OECD) in 2008-9**

Doc. 11985 prov.

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Anna Lilliehöök (Sweden, EPP/CD)

Doc. 12024

Contribution from the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee

Spokesperson: Luca Volonte (Italy, EPP/CD)

Contribution from the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

Spokesperson: Pedro Agramunt, (Spain, EPP/CD)

Contribution from the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Spokesperson: Jan Kazmierczak (Poland, EPP/CD)

Doc. 12019

Contribution from the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

Spokesperson: Rudi Vis (United Kingdom, SOC)

Since 1962 the Assembly has acted as the parliamentary forum for the 30-nation Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, inviting parliamentarians from OECD member countries which are not members of the Council of Europe (Australia, Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, New Zealand and the United States), as well as the European Parliament, to join its members in an enlarged debate on an annual report.

In this latest provisional report, the Economic Affairs Committee looks forward seeing progress towards OECD membership for Chile, Estonia, Israel, the Russian Federation and Slovenia, but says that only countries fully respecting democracy, human rights and the rule of law, including international law, should be invited to join the organisation. On the global economy, the committee cautiously welcomes the tentative signs of recovery, which – if they persist – would point to an earlier recovery than envisaged a few months ago. On the other hand, it is concerned about unsustainable debt levels in some countries, and says these must be brought under control as soon as the crisis permits.

The committee notes with concern the OECD's prediction of a staggering 16 per cent drop in world trade growth in 2009, and urges all countries to avoid any protectionism in response, and to work towards reviving the Doha Round of trade talks. Finally, the committee welcomes the 10 per cent increase in development assistance from OECD countries in 2008 to almost \$120 billion, the highest ever figure in dollar terms, but points out this is still only 0.3 per cent of their combined national income, and well short of the UN's 0.7 per cent target.

Statement by Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the OECD

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

Wednesday 30 September 2009

Afternoon (3 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **Current affairs debate: the situation of human rights defenders and the increasing violence in the North Caucasus region of the Russian Federation**

Dick Marty (Switzerland, ALDE) will be the opening speaker in this debate. A current affairs debate is not based on a report and does not give rise to a vote.

◆ **Allegations of politically-motivated abuses of the criminal justice system in Council of Europe member states**

Doc. 11993

Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger (Germany, ALDE)

Opinion of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Christos Pourgourides (Cyprus, EPP/CD)

Opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Kimmo Sasi (Finland, EPP/CD)

In this report, the Legal Affairs Committee looks at how susceptible different European justice systems are to political pressures in sensitive criminal cases. The rapporteur compares the situation in four countries representing the principal types of criminal justice systems in Europe: the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Russia. By way of example, she analyses in detail high-profile cases such as the dropping of the British Aerospace fraud investigation and the "cash for honours" scandal in the United Kingdom, or the second Khodorkovsky trial and the HSBC/Hermitage Capital case in Russia.

For each country, the committee suggests different ways of reinforcing the independence of judges. In the United Kingdom, the Attorney General's role should be urgently reformed to strengthen his or her accountability to Parliament. France should reconsider the proposed abolition of the *juge d'instruction* or provide greater independence to prosecutors, Germany should set up judicial councils – as in the vast majority of other European countries – and ban Justice Ministers from giving the prosecution instructions in individual cases. Russia, where recent high-profile cases give rise to concerns that President Medvedev's fight against "legal nihilism" is far from won, needs to do more to combat corruption and overcome old-style "telephone justice" by promoting a spirit of independence in judges and prosecutors, and by ending the harassment of defence lawyers.

Overall, the committee concludes, the criminal justice systems of all member states are exposed to political meddling, though to different degrees. A careful balance between the different elements of a justice system – judges, prosecutors, defence lawyers and police – can help, as well as objective procedures for allocating cases, but the key is a robustly independent judiciary, free to perform its important role without fear or favour, guided only by the law.

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

◆ **Drafting an additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights concerning the right to a healthy environment**

Doc. 12003

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

Rapporteur: José Mendes Bota (Portugal, EPP/CD)

Opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Christopher Chope (United Kingdom, EDG)

According to the Environment Committee, the time has come to draft a new protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights which would recognise the right to a healthy and viable environment. This would be a logical extension of the Council of Europe's existing role in protecting the environment, encourage states to live up to their green commitments, and give legal shape to the principle of solidarity between generations.

As early as 1972, a UN declaration spelled out the general principle that humankind has "the fundamental right to... adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being". Several Council of Europe member states already declare an individual constitutional right to environmental protection, and even the European Court of Human Rights, in its case-law, has already acknowledged the link between pollution and human rights.

The objection that such a right is by definition collective rather than individual is unjustified, according to the rapporteur, and can be overcome by careful drafting. Filtering of applications could also prevent it adding to the Court's overload, he suggests.

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

◆ **Challenge, on procedural grounds, of the still unratified credentials of the parliamentary delegation of Moldova**

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

The still unratified credentials of the parliamentary delegation of Moldova were challenged at the opening of the session on the procedural grounds that the delegation was not composed so as to ensure a fair representation of the political parties or groups in the parliament (Rule 7 of the Rules of Procedure).

Under the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, the matter is referred without debate to the Committee on the Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, which shall propose in a draft resolution to ratify the credentials, not to ratify them, or to ratify them but deprive or suspend some of the rights of participation or representation of members of the delegation concerned.

The Rules Committee is due to adopt this draft resolution during its meeting at 2 p.m. on Tuesday 29th September.

Thursday 1 October 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Reconsideration on substantive grounds of previously ratified credentials of the Russian delegation (Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly)**

Report of the Monitoring Committee

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

Seventy-two members of the Assembly, belonging to at least two political groups and five national delegations, have tabled a motion to reconsider on substantive grounds the previously ratified credentials of the Russian delegation to the Assembly.

The signatories say they are seriously concerned about the persistent failure by the Russian Federation to honour the obligations and commitments imposed upon it by the Assembly's two resolutions on the war between Georgia and Russia, and its lack of co-operation.

Under the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, a report is automatically prepared on a request to reconsider 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 Monitoring Committee is due to adopt this draft resolution during its meeting at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday 29th September.

◆ **United Nations reform and the Council of Europe member states**

Doc. 12018

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Andreas Gross (Switzerland, SOC)

Born from the ashes of a global catastrophe, the United Nations has succeeded in preventing a disaster of such dimensions from occurring again, according to the Political Affairs Committee. It should be given credit for its role in reducing the number and the deadliness of conflicts worldwide, especially since the end of the Cold War.

Notwithstanding its considerable achievements in preserving peace and international security, the world body is in urgent need of far-reaching reform to make it more democratic, transparent, accountable and up to the task of dealing with today's global challenges. Yet, in spite of many reform proposals, the UN still has no parliamentary dimension, more necessary than ever as globalisation advances. Restoring the role and authority of the General Assembly would also help to make the UN more democratic.

As for ever-elusive reform of the Security Council, the committee backs British and French proposals for transitional changes – based on a new category of non-permanent seats – as a way of overcoming the long-lasting deadlock. The Security Council needs to be able to act swiftly when there is the possibility of serious and widespread human rights violations, and such action should not be impeded by the vetoes of the permanent members, the committee believes.

Finally, Council of Europe member states should try to reach a common position on these reforms so that they can form a united front in the discussions taking place.

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

◆ **Address by Danilo Türk, President of Slovenia**

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

The Joint Committee, which is the organ of co-ordination between the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly, meets from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. in Room 5 – a change from the usual meeting in the evening, in order to take into account the arrangements for the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe. The committee is due to discuss enhancing dialogue and co-operation between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers, as well as current political questions.

Thursday 1 October 2009

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-6.30 p.m.)

◆ **The future of the Council of Europe in the light of its 60 years of experience**

Doc. 12017

Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Jean-Claude Mignon (France, EPP/CD)

The world has undergone far-reaching changes since the Council of Europe was founded sixty years ago. Originally seen as the pioneer of European unity, the Council's embrace of central and eastern European countries at the end of the Cold War was a natural extension of its unique triple role as promoter of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, as legal standard-setter and as forum for dialogue.

Yet the Organisation has problems and difficulties too: member states seem less committed to it, freezing its budget, signing up to fewer of its standards and sending ministers increasingly rarely to its meetings, while even its parliamentarians are turning up less. There is also a tendency to see fundamental values through the prism of political expediency, which is dangerous. Meanwhile, EU states are starting to take pre-agreed common positions in the Committee of Ministers, which creates a harmful new dividing line.

Member states must get serious about their commitment to the Council, not least as regards money, make use of its work and listen to what it is saying – and especially what its Court is saying, whose judgments are binding. They need to remember that criticism from Council bodies is ultimately meant to help them. Meanwhile, relations between the Council's statutory organs need to be rebalanced and dialogue between its ministerial and parliamentary arms revitalised. The Council also needs to sell itself better: for example, while it has many activities as a think-tank on democracy, it needs to aim at becoming a true "Davos of Democracy", an internationally high-profile centre of excellence in the subject. Finally, there needs to be an urgent solution to the current deadlock over the Court, which jeopardises the entire future of human rights protection in Europe.

Statement by Pierre Lellouche, Secretary of State for European Affairs of France

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

◆ **Honouring of obligations and commitments by Monaco**

Doc. 12012

Monitoring Committee

Co-rapporteurs: Leonid Slutsky (Russia, SOC) and Pedro Agramunt (Spain, EPP/CD)

In October 2009, Monaco will celebrate five years as a member of the Council of Europe. In that time, the Principality has ratified 40 of the 205 Council of Europe conventions and signed three others, honouring many of the promises it made when it joined, and has enacted or modified laws on equality, nationality, media and freedom of association, fulfilling all its commitments on domestic legislation.

The committee nevertheless calls on Monaco to ratify remaining conventions and protocols – including the Revised European Social Charter, hopefully no later than October – and complete reforms of the Criminal and Penal Codes, as well as expanding the powers of the National Council in various ways as part of its current reforms.

Overall, the committee concludes that Monaco has clearly demonstrated its determination and ability to fulfil the undertakings it made on joining the Council, and believes it will continue the process of reform it has begun. It therefore recommends closing the monitoring procedure but continuing to carry on post-monitoring dialogue with the Principality on outstanding issues.

Stéphane Valeri, the President of Monaco's National Council, is due to make a short statement following the vote.

Contact in the secretariat: Marine Trevisan, tel. 3716.

Friday 2 October 2009

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Rape of women, including marital rape**

Doc. 12013

Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Rapporteur: Marlene Rupperecht (Germany, SOC)

Every year, millions of women are raped by their husbands, partners or ex-partners, male relatives or acquaintances, or complete strangers. However, most of these rapes are not reported. Even when they are, the perpetrators often escape punishment because the police, prosecutors and the courts take into account the history of the victim's relationship with the rapist, or find no evidence of physical violence. There are also widespread attitudes – including among police, lawyers and judges – that victims are somehow partly to blame. In reality, of course, any woman can be raped, but no woman deserves to be raped.

Consent is necessary for sexual intercourse every time, the Equal Opportunities Committee points out, whatever the relationship of the victim with the rapist. Member states' legislation on rape and sexual violence should be based on this basic principle, but should also make clear that victims should not be required to physically resist the attacker, and should protect victims' private lives.

But preventing rape goes beyond the law. States should develop a comprehensive strategy which includes public information, training police, doctors and social workers, as well as programmes of protection and assistance for victims at every step – including, possibly, compensation.

Ultimately, the best way to avoid this crime is what the committee describes as "empowering girls and women not to be victims, and teaching boys and men to respect girls and women".

Contact in the secretariat: Tanja Kleinsorge, tel. 2906.

◆ **The functioning of democratic institutions in Moldova: implementation of Resolution 1666 (2009)**

Doc. 12011

Report of the Monitoring Committee

Co-rapporteurs: Josette Durrieu (France, SOC) and Egidijus Vareikis (Lithuania, EPP/CD)

As part of its monitoring procedure, the Assembly has been supporting the progressive development of Moldova's institutions, but the post-electoral events in April 2009 were a disappointment.

However, the Monitoring Committee congratulates the Moldovan people on the large turnout and democratic manner in which they made their choice in the recent snap elections, and praises the authorities for organising them in an orderly way at short notice. Nevertheless, it points out that the main flaws in the election were similar to those in earlier ones – especially subtle intimidation and media bias during the campaign – and calls on the new parliament to improve the electoral laws and practices to avoid these problems next time.

While the new elections have changed the balance of Moldova's political forces, still no political force has the majority needed to elect the President. The new dominant coalition and opposition should therefore enter into meaningful negotiations to break the deadlock, the committee says. Once the President and new Prime Minister are in place, there needs to be far-reaching reform – including, where appropriate, of the Constitution – to avoid such institutional deadlock in the future.

That, and continuing to work on requests made by the Assembly in earlier resolutions, should be priorities for the new government.

Contact in the secretariat: Artemy Karpenko, tel. 5209.

◆ **Joint debate**

Water: a strategic challenge for the Mediterranean Basin

Doc. 12004

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

Rapporteur: Bernard Marquet (Monaco, ALDE)

Although water is essential to life, there are currently 3 billion people in the world who do not have access to drinking water, the Environment Committee points out. Climate change, the over-exploitation of aquifers and springs, deforestation, intensive farming and rapid urbanisation have all contributed to dwindling reserves of this precious resource, and the pollution of rivers and groundwater.

Civilisations and societies have always developed in places where there is water and fertile land, and the lack of water will certainly lead to tension and conflicts, the committee warns – even, in the view of some experts, future wars fuelled by the search not for oil but water. Water stress is already a reality in some parts of Europe, especially the Mediterranean.

Council of Europe member states should draw up laws governing the right to water and sanitation, manage jointly rivers or aquifers which straddle their boundaries, decentralise water management to local and regional authorities and seek to create a culture of "water awareness" through public education. They should also make water technology – particularly for desalination or treating wastewater – available to those countries that need it most.

Ultimately, water is a resource that is shared by all of humankind, and access to it should be seen as a fundamental human right.

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

Towards a new ocean governance

Doc. 12005

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

Rapporteur: Maria Manuela de Melo (Portugal, SOC)

The oceans cover two-thirds of the earth's surface and are the place where life itself began, yet they are in deep trouble, according to the Environment Committee. The problems are many: climate change is causing rising sea levels, unusual variations in ocean currents, imbalances in ecosystems, declining biodiversity and a dwindling capacity to absorb carbon dioxide. The spread of coastal cities is speeding up coastal erosion and driving pollution. Overfishing and other economic activities are stripping bare parts of the ocean, whose resources are finite.

As technology allows us to extract ever more from the life-giving depths, the decline in the marine environment becomes steeper. This approach is irrational, unjust and unsustainable, according to the committee.

What is needed is a common vision of the role of the oceans, similar to the integrated maritime policy already proposed by the EU in its 2007 "Blue book". Council of Europe governments must start working towards a legal and institutional framework that makes this possible, encourage maritime research and alert the wider public to the looming problems. Ocean-friendly policies for managing coastlines, creating and running protected areas and sharing both technology and resources will be essential

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

◆ **Fifteen years since the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action**

Doc. 11992

Report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Christine McCafferty (United Kingdom, SOC)

2009 is the fifteenth anniversary of the UN's ground-breaking International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, when the leaders of 179 nations spelled out the close link between population and development, and made a series of promises – to be carried out during a twenty-year programme of action – on empowering women and advancing education and health, including reproductive health.

While there have been some achievements, progress on education, gender equality and reducing mortality – as well as expanding sexual and reproductive health services – is mixed, according to the Social Affairs Committee. Most countries have not reached the goals on gender equality and education, millions of women still have unmet family planning needs, and hundreds of thousands continue to die every year from pregnancy-related causes, overwhelmingly in developing countries. Violence against women continues to be widespread, and even in some Council of Europe member states, access to sexual and reproductive health services is patchy.

With five years to go, governments need to review progress, compare policies and boost funding for population policies, the committee says. Special attention should be given to reducing maternal mortality, ensuring appropriate sexuality and relationship information in schools, making modern family planning methods available, reducing HIV/AIDS and sexually-transmitted diseases, and protecting women from abuse.

Contact in the secretariat: Silvia Arzilli, tel. 4898.

◆ **Closure of the fourth 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.) is published for each part-session.

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 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 was 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 of the Rules 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 28 September: Monday 28 September at 12 noon;
- for debates on Tuesday 29 September: Monday 28 September 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. Voting and voting cards

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

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 members to present their 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 (six 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 (see below).

11. 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.

12. 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.

13. 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 (pp. 106-108).

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.

14. 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.

15. 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, are published on the Assembly's website.

16. 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.

17. 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.

18. 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

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Table Office

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

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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.