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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE



20-24 June 2011

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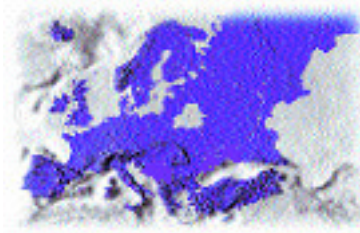
- Joint debate on the state of human rights in Europe:
 - National parliaments: guarantors of human rights in Europe
 - The role of parliaments in the consolidation and development of social rights in Europe, and statements by:
 - Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, Federal Minister of Justice of Germany
 - Dominic Grieve, Attorney General for England and Wales
- Award ceremony for the 2011 Human Rights Prize of the Parliamentary Assembly
- Current affairs debate: the political and humanitarian consequences of the situation in Syria and Libya
- More women in economic and social decision-making bodies
- Expansion of democracy by lowering the voting age to 16

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- The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (June 2010-May 2011)
- Joint debate:
 - Towards a European framework convention on youth rights
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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 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)



177

Socialist Group (SOC)



100

European Democrat Group (EDG)



97

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)



29

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 20 June 2011

☞ Morning (11.30 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Opening of the third part of the 2011 Ordinary Session**

Parliamentary Assembly President Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu opened the third part of the 2011 Ordinary Session and made an opening statement.

The Assembly examined the credentials of new members notified by national delegations and dealt with changes in the membership of committees. It also elected Krista Kiuru (Finland, SOC) as a Vice-President of the Assembly with respect to Finland.

Adopting its agenda, the Assembly decided to hold a current affairs debate on "The political and humanitarian consequences of the situation in Syria and Libya" on Thursday afternoon. It also decided to add a debate on "Expansion of democracy by lowering the voting age to 16".

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

Rapporteur: Dariusz Lipiński (EPP/CD)

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

Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD) presented the conclusions of the Assembly's observation of the early parliamentary elections in "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" (5 June 2011).

Monday 20 June 2011

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-5 p.m.)

◆ **Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly, presented by Kostyantyn Gryshchenko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers**

Doc. 12641

Following his presentation, Mr Gryshchenko will answer questions from members of the Assembly. The deadline for tabling written questions is Monday 13 June at 11.30 a.m.

◆ **Joint debate:**

Budgets and priorities of the Council of Europe for the financial years 2012-2013

Doc. 12622

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Erol Aslan Cebeci (Turkey, EPP/CD)

The Economic Affairs Committee supports the reforms initiated by the Secretary General to revitalise the Council of Europe and give it fresh political impetus, including rationalised structures and tighter control of staff expenditure. It acknowledges the need for a reinforced field presence – though continues to have reservations about new offices in Geneva, Vienna and Warsaw – and can accept cuts in co-operation programmes if this means they are better matched to the challenges faced by member states. A refocusing of the intergovernmental sector is also necessary, though the parliamentarians warn that it should meet the needs not just of foreign affairs ministries, but those of other specialised ministries too, and therefore the wider interest of member states.

A review of the relevance of the Council of Europe's 210 conventions and protocols is also a good move, though the Assembly – as the instigator of many of these treaties – believes it should be closely involved in any resulting action plan. The committee also welcomes the introduction of a biennial budget, a long-standing request of the Assembly, but argues that this will only be a major step forward if the rules of budget management are also made more flexible, for example by allowing unspent appropriations from the first year to be carried over to the second.

The future of the European Court of Human Rights continues to be a critical issue for the Council of Europe, and the committee is surprised that – given the Assembly's historical role in shaping and supporting the Convention and electing the judges – it has not been asked to participate in the long-term strategic reflection on the Court. Finally, the committee suggests a stronger fundraising capacity, including negotiating with the EU a stable, sustainable system for funding joint programmes.

With all the fresh challenges of assisting emerging democracies in the Mediterranean basin, the Council of Europe needs to be as capable and focused as ever, the committee concludes.

Contact in the secretariat: Yann de Buyer, tel. 2911.

Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the financial years 2012-2013

Doc. 12623

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Erol Aslan Cebeci (Turkey, EPP/CD)

The Assembly recognises that it must play its part in the overall reform of the Council of Europe that is currently under way, and has launched its own internal process of reflection, aimed at strengthening its relevance, effectiveness and visibility, as well as creating stronger links with national parliaments.

The Assembly has already taken steps to rationalise its work and reduce its expenditure, with its overall budget falling by 2 per cent in real terms from 2005 to 2010, and operational expenditure declining by 16 per cent over the same period. Given the financial difficulties affecting certain member states, the Assembly should agree to reduce its expenditure again, the Economic Affairs Committee suggests, in line with the 0.75 per cent cut requested by the Secretary General for 2012-2013, saving a total of 109 100 euros.

According to the committee, priorities for the coming period should include stepping up the assistance programme for the parliaments of member states and states with "Partner for Democracy" status, and further modernisation of the Assembly's IT capacity, as well as building on the successful installation of modern communication technologies already undertaken in the Chamber.

Contact in the secretariat: Yann de Buyer, tel. 2911.

Tuesday 21 June 2011

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of France**

Doc. 12616

Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 3 p.m. to 5 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 obtained, a second round of voting will take place on Wednesday 22 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.

◆ **Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly, submitted by the Parliament of Morocco**

Doc. 12625

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Luca Volontè (Italy, EPP/CD)

Opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Arcadio Díaz Tejera (Spain, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Rapporteur: Nursuna Memecan (Turkey, ALDE)

In January 2010 the Assembly created "Partner for Democracy" status, to allow parliaments of non-member states in neighbouring regions to benefit from its experience in democracy-building. Partners for Democracy can send parliamentary delegations to participate in the work of the Assembly, provided they commit to pursue the values upheld by the Council of Europe, hold free and fair elections, work towards abolishing the death penalty, and encourage the balanced participation of women and men in public life. Less than two months later, the Speakers of the two Chambers of the Moroccan Parliament requested "Partner for Democracy" status in a letter to the President of the Assembly, the first parliament to do so.

At a time when many people in Arab and Mediterranean countries are expressing their desire to acquire basic political and social rights, the Political Affairs Committee deems it important that Morocco, with its well-established political institutions and traditions of pluralism, continues on the path of democratic transformation. The country has committed to deep constitutional, institutional,

political and legal reform, an aim broadly shared by its political forces, public officials and civil society. A closer relationship with the Assembly would encourage these reforms, the committee believes.

The Moroccan Parliament should therefore be granted Partner for Democracy status, and invited to appoint a delegation of six Representatives and six Substitutes, according to the Political Affairs Committee. No later than in two years' time Morocco's progress should be reviewed against a number of benchmarks indicated by the committee based on a series of institutional and legal reforms – including striking the death penalty from the Penal Code, in order to build on the *de facto* moratorium on executions that has been in place since 1993. The Assembly also expects to be invited to observe any parliamentary elections in Morocco.

Statements by:

– **Abdelwahed Radi, Speaker of the House of Representatives of Morocco**

– **Mohamed Cheikh Biadillah, Speaker of the House of Counsellors of Morocco**

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

◆ **Address by Victor Yanukovich, President of Ukraine**

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

Tuesday 21 June 2011

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of France (continued)**

Doc. 12616

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

◆ **The situation in Tunisia**

Doc. 12624

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE)

The Political Affairs Committee again pays tribute to the courage of the Tunisian people who, despite violent repression, showed in "the Jasmine Revolution" their determination to transform Tunisia into a free, open and democratic country. Five months on, the process of democratic transition is well under way – not least plans for elections to a National Constituent Assembly – and the political process seems broadly inclusive. Without giving lessons, the Assembly should reaffirm its readiness to place its experience at the disposal of Tunisia's institutions.

However, deterioration of the economic and social situation – including a big rise in unemployment – is a worry. The revolution created high expectations, and disillusion and disappointment could swiftly set in if the economic situation continues to decline. Internal security should be strengthened, corruption and nepotism curbed, and abuses of the former ruling elite investigated.

Organising free and fair elections will be the first major challenge, requiring media freedom, basic civil rights, transparent funding of parties, neutral security forces, and the presence of outside observers. Politicians should act responsibly, respect election laws and accept the result. The active involvement of civil society will also be needed. Keeping the reform process on track after the election will be a big challenge too.

The Council of Europe must do all it can to support democracy in Tunisia, not least with practical assistance on electoral matters, and by involving Tunisian representatives in its own activities. The Venice Commission's expert advice will continue to be necessary, while Tunisia could consider signing up to other Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements, and the future Tunisian Parliament could also consider applying for "Partner for Democracy" status with the Assembly. The Committee of Ministers should also think about creating a special status for the countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean.

Finally, Tunisia's international partners, especially the EU, should do more to help stimulate the economy and stabilise the country socially. As the Political Affairs Committee points out, the success of Tunisia, which was at the forefront of the "Arab spring", is important for democracy throughout the region.

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

◆ **Joint debate:**

Asylum seekers and refugees: sharing responsibilities in Europe

Doc. 12630

Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

Rapporteur: Christopher Chope (United Kingdom, EDG)

A fresh wave of "boat people" from North Africa in recent months has brought – according to the latest figures – some 34 460 people to Italy, comprising about 23 000 irregular migrants and about 11 000 asylum seekers or refugees, and 1 106 to Malta, almost all asylum seekers or refugees. Although these numbers are relatively high, they are still only a fraction of the approximately 750 000 refugees that have so far been taken in by North African countries neighbouring Libya.

These numbers should not pose an insurmountable problem for Europe as a whole, the Migration Committee points out, although the arrival of these people in certain regions does pose a greater problem for the countries concerned. Malta in particular, because of its size and population, and the tiny Italian island of Lampedusa, face the greatest strain. These "frontline" states have requested help – and the committee believes that it is a moral duty of all other Council of Europe member states, because of this uneven geographical distribution, to shoulder their fair share of responsibility for resettling these refugees, whose needs are different from those of purely economic migrants.

This issue also needs to be resolved to avoid further tensions within the EU, notably over the operation of the Schengen visa-free regime. Meanwhile the "Dublin system", which supposedly regulates responsibility for dealing with asylum claims in the EU, has already been shown to be unfair and urgently needs reform. The EU must do more to support states under pressure, making more money available and stepping up the work of its border agency FRONTEX. It could also do more to help Council of Europe member states that are not in the EU which face similar problems.

Contact in the secretariat: Isild Heurtin, tel. 4100.

The interception and rescue at sea of asylum-seekers, refugees and irregular migrants

Doc. 12628

Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

Rapporteur: Arcadio Díaz de Tejera (Spain, SOC)

As Europe struggles to cope with the relatively large-scale arrival of migratory flows by boat from Africa, arriving mainly through Italy, Malta, Spain, Greece and Cyprus, the surveillance of Europe's southern borders has become a regional priority, according to the Migration Committee. The passengers are often travelling in unseaworthy boats, at the mercy of unscrupulous traffickers, and there have been many fatal incidents.

The committee once again expresses its deep concern at some of the measures taken to deal with these desperate people. Sometimes they are "pushed back", which calls into question the well-established principle of *non-refoulement*, and there seem to be different ideas about what constitutes the "place of safety" where those who are rescued must be taken. Even joint operations run by the EU's border agency FRONTEX do not have adequate guarantees that human rights will be fully respected. Finally, countries on the southern borders of the EU are having to face a disproportionate burden in dealing with these flows, which is unfair.

States have a clear moral and legal obligation to save persons in distress, but beyond this they should rigorously apply international law in dealing with this influx. That means treating those intercepted humanely, giving them a fair chance to seek international protection when it is needed, and keeping detention to a minimum. FRONTEX staff need proper training in all these matters, and the international community needs to spell out with greater consistency exactly how maritime law should be applied.

Contact in the secretariat: Isild Heurtin, tel. 4100.

Wednesday 22 June 2011

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of France (possible second round)**

Doc. 12616

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

An absolute majority of votes cast is required in the first round of voting. If this is not obtained, a second round of voting takes place, for which a relative majority of votes will be sufficient.

◆ **Living together in 21st century Europe: follow-up to the report of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe**

Doc. 12631

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Latchezar Toshev (Bulgaria, EPP/CD)

Opinion of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Virág Kaufer (Hungary, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population

Rapporteur: Arcadio Díaz Tejera (Spain, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Rapporteur Gvozden Srećko Flego (Croatia, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Rapporteur: Elvira Kovács (Serbia, EPP/CD)

The Political Affairs Committee takes note of the report of the ten-member Group of Eminent Persons, headed by former German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, on "Living together – Combining diversity and freedom in 21st century Europe", presented in Istanbul in May 2011. Its proposals should give fresh impetus to the Council of Europe's current and future activities. The Group's findings corroborate many positions already taken by the Assembly, which remains ready and willing to contribute to the changes needed to ensure greater cohesion in European societies.

Europe is multicultural, according to the committee, and although multiculturalism is facing increasing difficulties at national level in some parts of Europe, assimilation is not an alternative. The active interaction of culturally different groups within a framework of basic European values is the way forward, the committee believes. Ways must be found to overcome what the Group of Eminent Persons called the current "crisis of leadership" in Europe, encouraging politicians and elected representatives to avoid stigmatising ethnic, minority or migrant communities, and countering the rise of xenophobic or racist parties.

Tolerant education policies, greater opportunities for cultural exchange and sporting contacts among the young, and a diverse media will all play their part. An annual Forum against extremism could be

organised, as well as a major "Campaign on living together" along the lines of the two "All different, all equal" campaigns. The appointment of a high-profile personality to disseminate the report also echoes a similar proposal from the Assembly for a "Delegate for Democracy".

Finally, the committee wholeheartedly supports the proposal to bring countries from the southern and eastern Mediterranean closer to the Council of Europe, matching the Assembly's own "Partner for Democracy" initiative.

Statement by Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

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

◆ Address by Serzh Sargsyan, President of Armenia

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

Wednesday 22 June 2011

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **Address by Nickolay Mladenov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria**

Following his address, the Foreign Minister will answer oral questions from members of the Assembly.

◆ **Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly**

Doc. 12627

Ad hoc Committee of the Assembly

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

The Parliamentary Assembly can be proud of its achievements over the last 60 years, yet now is also a good moment to reaffirm its mission by adapting its functioning to a changing context: the values upheld by the Council of Europe remain as inspirational as ever – as recent events in North Africa and the Middle East have shown – and the Secretary General has embarked on an ambitious reform of the Organisation as a whole.

The aim of any reform should be to strengthen the Assembly's political relevance and effectiveness, make it more visible, and improve its members' involvement, according to the *ad hoc* committee. Greater interaction with national parliaments – and with other international parliamentary bodies such as the European Parliament – would be an additional objective.

A swathe of measures proposed by the *ad hoc* committee – some of which would require a change of practice and others modifications to the Rules of Procedure – include greater flexibility in proposing what the Assembly debates, better follow-up to adopted texts, more user-friendly and interactive communication tools, and a number of practical changes to ensure more space for debates, a fairer distribution of speaking time, and longer committee meetings.

The Assembly is also invited to consider a change in its committee structure, by merging its current Economic, Social and Environment Committees into one Committee on Social Cohesion, Health and Sustainable Development, together with a commensurate redistribution of tasks among all eight of the remaining general committees.

Contact in the secretariat: Horst Schade, tel. 2075.

◆ **Living together in 21st-century Europe: follow-up to the report of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe (continued)**

Thursday 23 June 2011

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ Joint debate on the state of human rights in Europe:

National parliaments: guarantors of human rights in Europe

Doc. 12636

Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Christos Pourgourides (Cyprus, EPP/CD)

It is often assumed that only governments are responsible for fully and effectively implementing the international human rights norms that states sign up to – whereas in fact *all* state organs are bound by this legal obligation, whether executive, judicial or legislative, according to the Legal Affairs Committee. The key role of parliaments, in particular, is often overlooked.

There are plenty of ways parliaments can exercise influence: they debate issues of principle when they ratify international human rights treaties, they can vet draft laws for their “human rights compatibility”, and they can hold governments to account when they fail to uphold the standards they have voluntarily taken on – not least when it comes to implementing judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. They can also keep an eye on the rulings of judges and decisions of authorities at national level, and have a more general role in fostering the creation of a pervasive human rights culture. The committee points approvingly to several Council of Europe member states – notably the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Finland and Romania – which have set up parliamentary structures to monitor the implementation of judgments of the European Court.

All parliaments should have such structures, the committee suggests, ideally dedicated “human rights committees” which would rigorously and regularly monitor compliance with international human rights obligations, particularly the European Convention, and check that all new laws are in line with them. Governments should also be expected to report regularly to these committees on how they are implementing, for example, European Court judgments.

Contact in the secretariat: Roland Klages, tel. 5316.

The role of parliaments in the consolidation and development of social rights in Europe

Doc. 12632

Report of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Carina Ohlsson (Sweden, SOC)

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

Rapporteur: Sir Alan Meale (United Kingdom, SOC)

The Social Affairs Committee begins by deploring the recent dramatic cuts in welfare programmes in a number of European countries, hitting the poorest and most disadvantaged hardest. National parliaments have a vital role to play in countering such developments, the committee believes, and therefore protecting social rights, which form part of the corpus of human rights.

Parliaments should insist on regular reviews of how governments are implementing social rights, not least through the Council of Europe’s Social Charter and its enforcement mechanism, and keenly

scrutinise new laws, particularly when it comes to health. Protecting human rights, including social rights, should be the top priority when they vote on budgets. Meanwhile, there is further scope for bringing together parliamentarians from different countries who deal with social issues, especially in international fora, to work or campaign together.

Member states that have signed up to international standards on social rights must continue to uphold them as they have contracted to do, and take positions in world finance or trade bodies that enable those promises to be respected. On health in particular, their laws should be in line with the basic guarantees enshrined in the revised European Social Charter, as well as other international health treaties such as the Medicrime Convention. In particular, the four countries which have not yet ratified the 1991 "Turin Protocol" aimed at revitalising the Social Charter (Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom) should do so.

Finally, the Committee of Ministers should draft a new protocol on the right to health which would include the right to a healthy environment.

Contact in the secretariat: Angela Garabagiu, tel. 4520.

Statement by Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, Federal Minister of Justice of Germany

Statement by Dominic Grieve, Attorney General for England and Wales

◆ **Award ceremony for the 2011 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 second edition of the Prize is to be awarded to the Russian NGO "Committee against Torture" (*Komitet Protiv Pytok*), in recognition of the organisation's key role in assisting victims of serious human rights abuses. It was selected by a distinguished panel of leading figures from the world of human rights, chaired by PACE President Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, from a list of individuals or organisations nominated for the prize.

In a ceremony coinciding with the special debate held every two years on "the state of human rights in Europe", the President will present the Prize – consisting of a trophy, a diploma and a cheque for 10,000 euros – to Igor Kalyapin, Chairperson of the Committee Against Torture.

The winner of the first Prize in 2009 was British Irish Rights Watch, an NGO which has been monitoring the human rights dimension of the conflict in Northern Ireland since 1990.

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

Thursday 23 June 2011

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-7.30 p.m.)

◆ **Current affairs debate: the political and humanitarian consequences of the situation in Syria and Libya**

Robert Walter (United Kingdom, EDG) is due to open the debate. No report is prepared for a current affairs debate, and there is no vote.

◆ **More women in economic and social decision-making bodies**

Doc. 12540

Report of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

Rapporteur: Gisèle Gautier (France, EPP/CD)

Doc. 12637

Opinion of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Hermine Naghdalyan (Armenia, ALDE)

Although the proportion of women in the labour-market is increasing, they remain considerably under-represented in top management, as well as in the governing structures of trade unions, associations and other bodies, according to the Equal Opportunities Committee. This is a matter of justice, respect for human rights and good governance, as well as self-interest: studies show that companies which value and promote women achieve better productivity and are more profitable.

Discrimination in many forms lies behind this imbalance, and putting it right will involve both radical societal changes – such as countering the tendency for women to be stereotyped from an early age into certain roles, for example – and far-reaching anti-discrimination policies in the workplace. Progressive measures to enable women to reconcile family and professional life, without having to choose between them, will also be needed. Positive measures such as quotas for women are also, in the committee's view, a transitional but necessary exception to the rule of strict equality. Some member states have introduced – or are considering introducing – quotas for the governing boards of major firms, and some large companies are doing so anyway, even without a legal obligation.

Member states should legislate to help working mothers through progressive measures such as parental or family leave, flexible working time, a guarantee of being able to return to work after pregnancy and supportive childcare arrangements. Employers should be encouraged to offer equal pay for equal work. Other ideas include networking initiatives for high-flying women executives, an "Equality" label for progressive firms and organisations, gender-balance clauses in public tenders and feminised work titles. Finally, governments should lead the way by requiring state-owned and large private companies to guarantee a minimum of 40 per cent women on their governing and management boards.

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

◆ **Expansion of democracy by lowering the voting age to 16**

Doc. 12546

Report of the Political Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Miloš Aligrudić (Serbia, EPP/CD)

In 2007 Austria became the first Council of Europe member state to adopt a voting age of 16 for all municipal, state and national elections. Some German *länder*, one Swiss canton and the three British Crown Dependencies also permit voting at 16. The great majority of other member states currently have 18 as their minimum voting age, though the issue has recently been debated in several.

The Political Affairs Committee takes the view that young people should be encouraged to be as active as possible in political life. It points to studies which show that the earlier people actively participate in politics, the more likely they are to be engaged in later life. More younger voters could lead to better turnout figures, the committee suggests, and counter the tendency – as the population ages – for the agenda to become dominated by issues primarily of concern to older people. More generally, a wider franchise leads to more representative governments.

The committee proposes that young people be actively drawn into civic life through greater community involvement and education. States should investigate the possibility of lowering the voting age to 16 years for all kinds of elections, as well as whether the age for standing for election could also be reduced.

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

Friday 24 June 2011

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (June 2010-May 2011)**

Doc. 12634 and Addendum

Report of the Monitoring Committee

Rapporteur: Dick Marty (Switzerland, ALDE)

In the latest of its annual reports, covering the period June 2010 to May 2011, the Monitoring Committee draws general conclusions from its assessments of the ten monitored member states (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Russia, Serbia and Ukraine) and the four countries engaged in post-monitoring dialogue (Bulgaria, Monaco, "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" and Turkey) as regards the progress they have made in fulfilling their obligations and commitments to the Council of Europe.

The committee focuses on four main areas where it detects systemic problems in monitored countries – elections and political pluralism, parliamentary co-operation with the opposition, the constitutional framework, and the capacities of parliament – and makes concrete recommendations to the monitored countries concerned.

The committee also completes its second three-year cycle of reports on member states not subject to monitoring or post-monitoring dialogue by assessing the third and final group of eleven countries (Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) based on reports from relevant Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms. It lists important treaties that states in this group have still not signed or ratified.

Finally, in view of the committee's forthcoming 15th anniversary, and in the context of reform of the Assembly, the committee reports that it has initiated discussion on ways of making the monitoring procedure more effective, thus improving member states' compliance with their statutory obligations. The rapporteur, in his explanatory memorandum, sets out some options for the future.

Contact in the secretariat: Agnieszka Nachilo, tel. 2905.

◆ **Joint debate:**

Towards a European framework convention on youth rights

Doc. 12629

Report of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education

Rapporteur: Elvira Kovács (Serbia, EPP/CD)

The Assembly has long been concerned with the rights of young people, believing that the period of transition between childhood and adulthood is crucial for the development of individuals as fulfilled and responsible members of society. In order to become fully independent and autonomous, young people should be able to expect education or training that is affordable and matches the needs of the job market, a job with reasonable pay, the possibility to move on from the parental home to decent housing, sound advice on staying healthy and living sustainably, and access to stimulating and enriching cultural or sporting activities. They also need opportunities for expressing themselves, taking

decisions and – in time – participating fully in the great debates of society and the democratic process itself.

Having reviewed young people's access to their rights in Europe, the Culture Committee proposes consideration of a framework convention on youth rights and sets out ten guiding principles on which such a text could be based. States should be signing up to a raft of measures for promoting the well-being of their young people as an investment in the future, the committee believes. Ideas put forward in the guidelines include better access to education and academic mobility, free sporting facilities, tax breaks for people at the beginning of their careers, social housing and low-interest mortgages for the young, as well as timely and accurate advice on preventing sexually-transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy and drug or alcohol abuse.

Contact in the secretariat: Penelope Denu, tel. 2332.

Reversing the sharp decline in youth unemployment

Doc. 12626

Report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Rapporteur: Marija Pečinić-Burić (Croatia, EPP/CD)

Opinion of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee

Rapporteur: Marietta Karamanli (France, SOC)

Around one in five of Europe's young people has no job, according to the Economic Affairs Committee, and youth unemployment rates remain twice as high as for the rest of the population. This is despite the fact that most young Europeans today have better levels of education than their parents, and that many European countries face labour shortages in a growing number of sectors. If governments fail to offer realistic solutions to youth unemployment, Europe may well have to pay the price of a "lost generation", compromising its competitiveness, security, social stability and future development prospects, the committee warns.

The mismatch between the qualifications of young people and the rapidly changing needs of the labour market, structural economic shifts and cuts in public spending on employment schemes are among the main causes of youth unemployment or under-employment. The situation is further aggravated by the economic crisis.

Member states should adjust their policies to bring them into line with the labour-related provisions of the revised European Social Charter and give greater priority to reducing youth unemployment. They need to promote better qualifications and more diverse skills, encourage mobility and inter-generational solidarity, improve access to jobs and apprenticeship schemes, and do more to connect up employers, state employment agencies and young jobseekers. The committee also stresses the need for Europe's policymakers to help southern Mediterranean countries to fully tap their development potential by offering a better future to their young people in their quest for jobs and sustainable livelihood.

Contact in the secretariat: Geza Mezei, tel. 2143.

◆ Closure of the third part of the 2011 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 on the Assembly's website 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, Greek and Turkish.

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 or 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 33 (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.

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 was published in January 2011 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).

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 (page 90 of the Rules of Procedure and forward), 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 20 June: Monday 20 June at 12 noon;
- for debates on Tuesday 21 June: Monday 20 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 33 of the Rules of Procedure.

5. Motions for resolutions and recommendations

A motion for a recommendation or resolution, not exceeding 300 words, must be signed by at least 20 Representatives or Substitutes belonging to 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 48.3 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 52 of the Rules of Procedure).

Any Representative or Substitute may add his or her signature to a written declaration up to the close of the next part-session, after which no further signatures may be added. The declaration shall be issued with the names of all members who have signed it.

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 56).

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 42.6).

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 49.4).

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 51) 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). Rapporteurs for opinion, to present the opinion or to reply to the debate, shall have the same speaking time to present their opinions as the speakers registered for the debate concerned. 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. For most guest speakers other than the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, 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. In this context, a deadline is specified in the draft agenda. The written questions to the Chairperson are published as an Assembly document.

In accordance with established practice, the Bureau has agreed that written questions will receive a written reply from the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers. These replies will be published in the report of the sitting. The Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers has indicated that he or she is prepared to give an oral reply to spontaneous questions at the end of his address. Rule 57.2 of the Rules of Procedure states, however, that "no Representative or Substitute may table more than one question for oral answer 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 oral reply" or "spontaneous question").

For the other guest speakers, there is no formal deadline as such, as the questions are "spontaneous". However, 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 Presidential dais; 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 38.9 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 40.3).

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

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(Speakers' lists, questions and amendments)

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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 midday 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 11.30 a.m. and from midday to 5.45 p.m., tel. 3712, librairie.kleber@coe.int

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 8 a.m. to 6.15 p.m., tel. 3549. Now selling parliamentary bus tickets.

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.