



25-29 June 2012

Monday 25

- Opening of the session and statement by Assembly President Jean-Claude Mignon
- Address by Sali Berisha, Prime Minister of Albania
- Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and the Standing Committee
- Free debate

Tuesday 26

- Election of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom
- Joint debate:
 - Austerity measures – a danger for democracy and social rights
 - The young generation sacrificed: social, economic and political implications of the financial crisis
 - The impact of the economic crisis on local and regional authorities in Europe
- Statement by Steingrímur Sigfússon, Minister of Economic Affairs of Iceland
- Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly, presented by Edmond Haxhinasto, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers
- Multiple discrimination against Muslim women in Europe: for equal opportunities

Wednesday 27

- Joint debate on the state of democracy in Europe: 'Democracy at risk: the role of citizens and of the State today'
 - The crisis of democracy and the role of the State in today's Europe
 - The portrayal of migrants and refugees during election campaigns
- Address by Zoran Milanović, Prime Minister of Croatia
- The honouring of obligations and commitments by Montenegro
- The situation of human rights defenders in Council of Europe member States

Thursday 28

- Urgent debate: the crisis of democracy in Egypt
- Current affairs debate: European institutions and human rights in Europe
- Political transition in Tunisia, and statement by Mustapha Ben Jaafar, President of the Constituent Assembly of Tunisia
- Roma migrants in Europe, and statement by Rudko Kawczynski, President of the European Roma and Travellers Forum

Friday 29

- The inadmissibility of restrictions on freedom of movement as punishment for political positions
- The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (June 2011-May 2012)

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, Republic of 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, Republic of 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 Parliament of Morocco (2011) and the Palestinian National Council (2011) hold "Partner for Democracy" status with the Assembly. The parliaments of Canada (1997), Israel (1957) and Mexico (1999) hold observer status with the Assembly.

The political groups



214

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



183

Socialist Group (SOC)



85

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)



83

European Democrat Group (EDG)



35

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL)

The Assembly committees

84 seats

- Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy
- Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights
- Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development
- Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons
- Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media
- Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination
- Committee on the honouring of obligations and commitments by member states of the Council of Europe (Monitoring)

37 seats

- Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs



Monday 25 June 2012

☞ Morning (11.30 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Opening of the third part of the 2012 Ordinary Session**

Parliamentary Assembly President Jean-Claude Mignon opened the third part of the 2012 Ordinary Session and made an opening statement.

The Assembly approved the credentials of its new members and took note of changes in the membership of committees. It also elected Olga Nachtmannova as a Vice-President of the Assembly with respect to the Slovak Republic.

Finally, the Assembly decided to hold an urgent debate on "The crisis of democracy in Egypt" (on Thursday 28 June at 10 a.m.) and a current affairs debate on "European institutions and human rights in Europe" (on Thursday 28 June at noon).

◆ **Address by Sali Berisha, Prime Minister of Albania**

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

Monday 25 June 2012

☞ Afternoon (3 p.m.-5 p.m.)

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

Doc. 12961 and Addendum, Doc. 12963

Rapporteur: João Bosco Mota Amaral (Portugal, EPP/CD)

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

◆ **Free debate**

Among the changes agreed by the Assembly as part of its own process of reform was a decision to introduce one "free debate" during each part-session, similar to the practice in a number of national parliaments.

Members of the Assembly are free to speak on any subject they would like to raise, subject to the usual practice of members submitting their names in advance and the drawing up of a list of speakers according to the d'Hondt method.

This is in line with one of the main aims of the reform, namely to raise the visibility of the Assembly and its members, including in their national constituencies.

Tuesday 26 June 2012

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

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

Doc. 12945

Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 3.30 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.

The Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe is elected by the Assembly, exceptionally for a three-year term of office.

The names of two candidates have been forwarded by the Committee of Ministers to the Assembly for the election, in alphabetical order Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni and Gérard Stoudmann.

Voting is by secret ballot. An absolute majority of the votes cast is required at the first ballot. In the event of a tie, a second round of voting will take place on Wednesday 27 June from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

◆ **Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom**

Doc. 12936

Voting takes place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., and from 3.30 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 27 June from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., for which a relative majority of votes is sufficient.

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

◆ **Joint debate:**

Austerity measures – a danger for democracy and social rights

Doc. 12948

Report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

Rapporteur: Andrej Hunko (Germany, UEL)

The Social Affairs Committee is worried that the austerity programmes being pursued by some European governments in response to the economic crisis – deep cuts in budgets, often affecting social spending – may further deepen the crisis by undermining democracy and hitting the poorest hardest. Europe needs to protect its social market economy, focusing on human concerns, against unbridled economic liberalism, the committee believes. It suggests that recent large bank rescues may be among the root causes of the crisis, and points out that austerity is linked to bodies whose character raises questions of democratic control, such as the IMF, the European Commission and the European Central Bank.

As well as budget cuts, public revenues should be boosted by stronger taxes on higher incomes and property wealth, shoring up the tax base, more effective tax collection and stronger measures against tax evasion and fraud, as well as tighter regulation of the financial sector. Economic recovery should be driven by job creation, equal access to employment and help to get young people into the workplace. Finally, decisions on the “sovereign debt crisis” should be as democratic as possible – with elected governments and parliaments retaining maximum control, greater transparency, more public debate on the social consequences of the new bailout funds, and direct consultations via referenda if necessary.

Contact in the secretariat: Maren Lambrecht-Feigl, tel. 4778.

The young generation sacrificed: social, economic and political implications of the financial crisis

Doc. 12951

Report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

Rapporteur: Luca Volontè (Italy, EPP/CD)

Opinion of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Rapporteur: Roman Jakič (Slovenia, ALDE)

Young people are a key asset in an ageing Europe, according to the Social Affairs Committee, and can be the future drivers of a more cohesive, prosperous and just society. Yet the current crisis has hit them harder than most, and risks leaving them jobless, poor and excluded. This is nothing less than a tragedy in the making, and could result in a “lost generation” of disillusioned young people, the committee warns.

Europe’s policymakers need to work harder at harnessing the natural dynamism and optimism of the young, creating “intergenerational solidarity” by sharing political, social and economic power with them. By helping young people to widen their skills and experience, find jobs and ultimately become active and engaged citizens, Europe as a whole will benefit in the long run.

The committee outlines a series of practical steps governments could take, including “youth guarantee” schemes so that no young person is left without a job or training for more than four months, better mechanisms for giving a voice to young people such as youth councils or parliaments, and ways of reinforcing social support for the young, including family-friendly policies to help young parents.

Contact in the secretariat: Aiste Ramanauskaite, tel. 3117.

The impact of the economic crisis on local and regional authorities in Europe

Doc. 12944

Report of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

Rapporteur: Sir Alan Meale (United Kingdom, SOC)

Local and regional authorities are among the first to face budget cuts as the economic crisis takes hold, the Social Affairs Committee points out, just at the moment when the difficult situation is driving a growing demand for public services. The committee is deeply concerned at the social damage this may cause, be it poorer public services or cuts in welfare, especially for the most vulnerable.

Local authorities themselves can take steps to lessen the negative effects of cuts by reallocating budgets so that basic social rights continue to be protected. They should keep up efforts to become more efficient and effective. They can also help to stimulate economic recovery by ensuring partnerships with businesses, educational and research institutions and civil society.

For their part, governments should give municipalities greater flexibility in setting their own charges, and widen the tax base they can directly draw on to make it more sustainable. Legal requirements which impose expensive service provision should be lifted, while groups in need of special support such as the sick, the elderly, the disabled or children should continue to receive it.

Contact in the secretariat: Maren Lambrecht-Feigl, tel. 4778.

Statement by Steingrímur Sigfússon, Minister of Economic Affairs of Iceland

◆ Communication from the Committee of Ministers to the Parliamentary Assembly, presented by Edmond Haxhinasto, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Albania, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers

Following his presentation, Mr Haxhinasto will answer questions from members of the Assembly.

Tuesday 26 June 2012

☞ Afternoon (3.30 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **Election of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
(continued)**

Doc. 12945

Voting takes place from 3.30 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.

◆ **Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights
(continued)**

Doc. 12936

Voting takes place from 3.30 p.m. to 5 p.m., in the area behind the presidential rostrum.

◆ **Joint debate (continued)**

◆ **Multiple discrimination against Muslim women in Europe:
for equal opportunities**

Doc. 12956

Report of the Committee on Equality and Non-discrimination

Rapporteur: Athina Kyriakidou (Cyprus, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media

Rapporteur: Raphaël Comte (Switzerland, ALDE)

Opinion of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

Rapporteur: Tülin Erkal Kara (Turkey, EPP/CD)

Muslim women in Europe – at least in countries where Islam is not the religion of the majority of the population – are often victims of stereotyping, their identity narrowly defined by their religious beliefs. The media sometimes perpetuate this one-dimensional image, focusing on their clothing, because of the political debates over the headscarf and the veil, or highlighting the fact that they are sometimes victims of so-called “honour killings”.

The reality is more nuanced: Muslim women have many identities and represent a diverse range of opinions and outlooks. Many of them want to be involved in creating change or empowerment. The Assembly should encourage these women in their quest for equal opportunities and active engagement with all aspects of life, according to the Equality Committee.

As well as robust anti-discrimination laws, including laws which specifically cover "multiple discrimination", governments can encourage Muslim women's groups and networks, ensure that all girls have access to all levels of education, and encourage diversity in the media and in public life. They should sign up to the Council of Europe's Convention to combat domestic violence and make sure health services cover women of every background.

For their part, Muslim religious leaders should publicly condemn violence against women and so-called "honour crimes" and explain that female genital mutilation is not a requirement of the Muslim faith.

Contact in the secretariat: Elodie Fischer, tel. 5634.

Wednesday 27 June 2012

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

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

Doc. 12945

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

In the event of a tie after the first round of voting, a second round of voting takes place, for which a relative majority of the votes cast is required.

◆ **Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights
(possible second round)**

Doc. 12936

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 is sufficient.

◆ **Joint debate on the state of democracy in Europe:
'Democracy at risk: the role of citizens and of the State today'**

The crisis of democracy and the role of the State in today's Europe

Doc. 12955

Report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Rapporteur: Andreas Gross (Switzerland, SOC)

Opinion of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

Rapporteur: Earl of Dundee (United Kingdom, EDG)

In 2011, the events of the Arab Spring put democracy squarely back into the public eye, with some even dubbing it "the year of democracy". But in Europe, the financial crisis has had the opposite effect, weakening democracy and leaving many citizens – the very people it is supposed to empower – deeply disillusioned by it and suspicious of their political institutions. The "indignados" movement, anti-globalisation protesters who adopted the smiling "V for vendetta" mask, and widespread street demonstrations are just some recent manifestations of popular discontent with the existing system.

In part, this is because democratic institutions – governments, parliaments and political leaders – were not able to anticipate the crisis or react to it swiftly enough. Faced with collapsing economies and the fear of sovereign default, governments turned to harsh austerity measures which have caused living

standards to plummet. At the same time, those affected saw it as unfair that vast sums from their taxes were used to bail out banks, rescue private companies or fend off market instability.

These accumulated problems are the result of years of bad governance and political short-sightedness, according to the Political Affairs Committee. Governments must pursue better regulation of financial markets, a fairer distribution of the tax burden, and policies which promote growth through infrastructure investment and sustainable development. They also need to co-operate more with each other, building democracy trans-nationally, not least at European level.

Finally, sound States with strong democracies need educated and engaged citizens who – through more representative institutions – feel listened to and in a position to influence decisions, as well as a vibrant civil society and a fearless and diverse press to hold them accountable.

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

The portrayal of migrants and refugees during election campaigns

Doc. 12953

Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

Rapporteur: Daphné Dumery (Belgium, NR)

Opinion of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Rapporteur: Miltiadis Varvitsiotis (Greece, EPP/CD)

Some politicians have a habit of resorting to xenophobic discourse during election campaigns, presenting migrants and refugees as a threat and a burden on society, reinforcing stereotypes about them to gain electoral advantage. Allied to fears of cultural difference and economic insecurity, this populist discourse can have a negative effect, magnified by some sensationalist media and spread via the internet or social networks. Even mainstream political parties are not immune to this tactic, creating fertile ground for more extreme xenophobic parties and radicalising the debate over migration policy.

European governments need to start giving the public straight facts about migration, encouraging open debate on its advantages and disadvantages while refusing to tolerate clearly xenophobic or racist discourse. Political leaders should speak out against any deliberate distortion, the media should be encouraged to report fairly and objectively on the issue, and there should be guidelines to avoid opinion polls being used in a biased way in this delicate area. Meanwhile election authorities could consider sanctions against those who go too far in misrepresenting migrants and refugees during campaigning.

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

Wednesday 27 June 2012

☞ Afternoon (3.30 p.m.-8 p.m.)

◆ **Address by Zoran Milanović, Prime Minister of Croatia**

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

◆ **Joint debate on the state of democracy in Europe (continued)**

◆ **The honouring of obligations and commitments by Montenegro**

Doc. 12952

Report of the Monitoring Committee

Co-rapporteurs: Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD) and Nursuna Memecan (Turkey, ALDE)

The Monitoring Committee congratulates Montenegro on the substantial progress made since 2010 towards the fulfilment of its remaining obligations and commitments towards the Council of Europe: it has ratified 83 conventions, and has contributed to many regional and international initiatives. It continues to play a positive role in the stabilisation of the region, helping to combat discrimination beyond its borders. Efforts to comply with Council of Europe standards are consolidating its path to European integration.

Montenegro has made progress in aligning its legislation regarding elections and citizenship with the constitution. However, the committee points out that Montenegro needs to make further progress in five key areas, namely the judiciary, minority rights, the fight against corruption and organised crime, the media, as well as the situation of internally displaced persons and refugees. The committee therefore recommends continued monitoring of Montenegro, pending progress in the above-mentioned five areas.

Contact in the secretariat: Sylvie Affholder, tel. 3551.

◆ **The situation of human rights defenders in Council of Europe member States**

Doc. 12957

Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Mailis Reps (Estonia, ALDE)

Across Europe there are men and women of courage and integrity – working for NGOs or as lawyers or journalists – who uphold, in practical ways, the values the Council of Europe holds dear, defending individuals who are victims of human rights violations, exposing wrong-doing or impunity, working on behalf of oppressed minorities or lobbying for justice.

In most Council of Europe member States, these people are able to work unimpeded and enjoy the protection of the law. But not everywhere: some face arbitrary arrest, harassment or orchestrated defamation campaigns – at times initiated by the State. In the worst cases, they have been abducted, tortured or even murdered.

Human rights defenders should be honoured for their work, according to the Legal Affairs Committee. Governments should create safe environments for them to play their vital role, and determinedly pursue anyone who seeks to harm them or obstruct their work. Moreover, there should be public recognition for the bravest and the most dedicated among them.

Contact in the secretariat: Agnieszka Szklanna, tel. 4141.

Thursday 28 June 2012

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **Urgent debate: the crisis of democracy in Egypt**

Report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

The Political Affairs Committee is due to approve this report at its meeting on Tuesday 26 June at 8.30 a.m. Deadline for tabling amendments: Wednesday 27 June at 12 noon.

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

◆ **Current affairs debate: European institutions and human rights in Europe**

This debate will be opened by Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE). No report is prepared for a current affairs debate, and there is no vote.

Thursday 28 June 2012

☞ Afternoon (3.30 p.m.-7.30 p.m.)

◆ **Political transition in Tunisia**

Doc. 12949

Report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Rapporteur: Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE)

Tunisia's "Jasmine Revolution" in 2011 ended the authoritarian regime there and paved the way for the dramatic changes of the Arab Spring. A year and a half on, the country is well advanced in its process of reform, according to the Political Affairs Committee: Tunisians enjoy the main democratic freedoms denied to them under the previous regime, though there is recognition that full democratic transition will take time.

A significant milestone were the elections to Tunisia's National Constituent Assembly, hailed as free and well organised by the Assembly, which conferred democratic legitimacy on the transition process. This is a first among the Arab Spring nations, for which Tunisia should be congratulated. The committee hopes that the future Constitution will meet Tunisians' expectations and will enshrine the universal values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Europe, with its own history of democratic development, can offer help and advice – not least from the experts of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission. In the subsequent elections, Tunisians showed that they have learned to make use of their newly-won political freedoms. A dynamic politics, filled with many voices, augurs well for the future, as does the active role of a vigilant civil society.

The transitional authorities face challenges – a difficult economic and social situation could undermine political stability, there are fears of Islamic fundamentalism, and far-reaching reforms in the areas of justice and security are still to come – but Tunisia is on the right path. For its part, the Assembly should encourage the National Constituent Assembly to request Partner for Democracy status, while continuing to offer it practical assistance.

Statement by Mustapha Ben Jaafar, President of the Constituent Assembly of Tunisia

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

◆ **Roma migrants in Europe**

Doc. 12950

Report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

Rapporteur: Annette Groth (Germany, UEL)

Opinion of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Rapporteur: Miloš Aligrudić (Serbia, EPP/CD)

Opinion of the Committee on Equality and Non-discrimination

Rapporteur: Ferenc Kalmár (Hungary, EPP/CD)

The Roma continue to be one of the most disadvantaged, discriminated against and persecuted groups in Europe, according to the Migration Committee. Popular prejudice regards them as nomads who have come illegally from abroad. Yet Roma have been part of European society for around 700 years, fewer than 20 per cent are actually nomadic, and most are migrating quite legally under EU freedom of movement laws.

Europe's governments must do more to explode the myths and prejudices surrounding the Roma, of which these are some, and end the "double discrimination" they face in accessing schools, doctors, jobs and houses. Collective expulsions of Roma should be stopped, forced returns to Kosovo suspended until they can be shown to be safe and sustainable, and stateless Roma naturalised. Negative stereotyping of Roma in the media and political speech should also be tackled.

Meanwhile, the Council of Europe should study how laws criminalising begging affect Roma, and look into whether they are affected by and/or involved in the trafficking of human beings.

Statement by Rudko Kawczynski, President of the European Roma and Travellers Forum

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

Friday 29 June 2012

☞ Morning (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

◆ **The inadmissibility of restrictions on freedom of movement as punishment for political positions**

Doc. 12943

Report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Rapporteur: Haluk Koç (Turkey, SOC)

Some Council of Europe member States have misused their legal right to determine who can enter their territory by refusing entry to some people merely as a punishment for a political or ideological position they peacefully hold, according to the Legal Affairs Committee. If the country refusing entry happens to be in the Schengen group, the individuals concerned can find themselves barred from all the other Schengen countries too.

The rapporteur cites as examples Estonia's 2007 travel ban on some members of the Russian youth group "Nashi", Russia's temporary refusal of entry to a German expert in 2007 "for security reasons" even though he had a visa, France's ban on a New Zealand Greenpeace activist who had taken part in a demonstration against French nuclear testing, and a Schengen alert issued by the German authorities that a visit by Unification Church leader Sun Myung Moon and his wife would "constitute a danger to German youth".

Denial of entry based solely on a person's political views could constitute discrimination under the European Convention on Human Rights, the committee points out. Restricting somebody's movement within the EU as a punishment for a political opinion would also be a violation of EU laws, and could give rise to claims for damages.

In short, states should never use restrictions on freedom of movement as a sanction for peacefully-held political opinions, the committee concludes. In particular, entries in the Schengen Information System should not be misused to deny non-EU nationals entry to the Schengen area for political reasons. Moreover, any ban entered in the Schengen database should be open to swift judicial or administrative review.

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

◆ **The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (June 2011-May 2012)**

Doc. 12954

Report of the Monitoring Committee

Rapporteur: Andres Herkel (Estonia, EPP/CD)

In its annual progress report, the Monitoring Committee assesses how far the ten countries under the Assembly's monitoring procedure are fulfilling their obligations and commitments as member States of the Council of Europe, as well as the four countries engaged in post-monitoring dialogue, and welcomes progress or expresses concern at setbacks in each case.

Furthermore, the committee introduces an important modification in the way it reports on the monitoring of the statutory obligations of the 33 countries which are not subject to the monitoring

procedure or to post-monitoring dialogue – deciding to abandon the three-year cycle of assessment in order to better reflect the findings of the various Council of Europe monitoring mechanisms, which have varying cycles.

Finally, the committee resolves to continue its reflection on the ways to increase both the impact and the efficiency of the monitoring procedure.

Contact in the secretariat: Caroline Ravaud, tel. 4551.

◆ **Closure of the third part of the 2012 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, certain 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, resolutions or opinions) 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:

- questions addressed to the Committee of Ministers;
- communications from the Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
- written declarations;
- motions tabled by members;
- any other document, at the discretion of the President of the Assembly (requests for opinion, report or communication by the Committee of Ministers, activity report by an institution of the Council of Europe, communication by the Secretary General, etc).

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 2012 in two parts, one being the Rules proper and the other the complementary texts, available in a bilingual version (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 (see p. 93 and following 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 25 June: Monday 25 June at 12 noon;
- for debates on Tuesday 26 June: Monday 25 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 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 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 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 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 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 43.7).

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

At the request of the Committee of Ministers, of the committee concerned, of a political group, 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, a committee 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. There may only be one current affairs debate per part-session. 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 or the same time as for speakers during the sitting. 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. Free debate

With a view to making part-sessions more interesting and lively, the Assembly introduced one "free debate" during each part-session as from January 2012. Assembly members are able to speak on a topic of their choice, not appearing on the agenda of the part-session. This debate usually takes place in the afternoon of the first day of the part-session and lasts for one hour. Members will have the opportunity, if they so wish, also to raise questions relating to one of the institutional entities of the Council of Europe and will obtain a written reply from them.

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 19.2). 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 and Partners for Democracy – 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.

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 4 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. For most guest speakers, including for the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, members are invited to submit the subject of their oral question.

For the Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, the member wishing to ask a written question must provide the text in writing within the deadline is specified in the draft agenda.

The written questions to the Chairperson as well as their answers are published as an Assembly Document.

In accordance with established practice, 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 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" or "oral question").

For the other guest speakers, there is no formal deadline as such, as the questions are "spontaneous". However, members must register their names on the list of speakers. The intervention by the personalities being limited to one hour, the number of questions which will receive an answer is necessarily limited.

15. Electronic voting

All votes in the Assembly, except elections, take place by 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 39.9 indicates that a member cannot modify his or her vote after the voting is closed.

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

16. 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 building 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.

17. Quorum

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

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

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

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

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

18. Majorities required

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

19. Mobile phones and laptop computers

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

Laptop computers may be used discreetly in the Chamber and each desk has an electronic socket for charging.

Directory

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Table Office

(Speakers' lists, questions and amendments)

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Protocol

Head of Protocol
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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

Just off the 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 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.