



SECRETARIAT

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10 March 2016

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris 8 March 2016

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Paris on 8 March 2016, with Mr Aleksandar Nikoloski ("The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", EPP/CD) in the Chair, welcomed the presence of Mr Pedro Agramunt, President of the Assembly and, as regards:

– **Open discussion on current issues:**

- voted on and rejected the proposal of Lord David Blencathra to take the item off the agenda and submit it to the Bureau of the Assembly;
- held an exchange of views on *The state of democracy and the rule of law in Poland* with the participation of Mr Dominik Tarczyński, member of the Polish delegation representing the governing majority; Mr Bogdan Klich, Senator, member of the Civic Platform and of the Committee, representing the opposition; Ms Joanna Banasiuk, Member of the Ordo Iuris Institute for Legal Culture; Ms Małgorzata Szuleka, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights; Ms Agnieszka Romaszewska-Guzy, Vice-Chairperson of the Association of the Polish Journalists; and Mr Jarosław Kurski, Deputy Editor in Chief of the newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza;

– **Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Palestinian National Council** (*Rapporteur: Mr Jordi Xuclà, Spain, ALDE*): approved a report, amended and unanimously adopted a draft resolution; was informed by Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, of the state of co-operation between the Council of Europe and the Palestinian Authority;

– **Situation in Lebanon and challenges for regional stability and European security** (*Rapporteur: Mr Tobias Zech, Germany, EPP/CD*): held an exchange of views with Mr Julien Barnes-Dacey, Senior Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations in London, and took note of an outline for report;

– **Corruption as governance regime: a barrier to institutional efficiency and progress** (*Rapporteur: Mr Michele Nicoletti, Italy, SOC*): held an exchange of views with Mr Drago Kos, Chairperson of the OECD Working Group on Bribery, and took note of an information note on the Rapporteur's fact finding visit to Ukraine on 19-20 January 2016 as well as an outline for report and decided to declassify both documents;

– **Libya's future between the threats of terrorism and a democratic prospect** (*Rapporteur: Mr Attila Korodi, Romania, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and held an exchange of views;

– **The political consequences of the crisis in Ukraine** (*Rapporteur: Ms Kristýna Zelenková, Czech Republic, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and took note of her intention to carry out a fact-finding visit to Kyiv and Mariupol from 4 to 8 April 2016;

– **Work programme:**

- appointed:
 - Ms Deborah Bergamini (Italy, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur on the *Political transition in Egypt*;
 - Mr Michele Nicoletti (Italy, SOC) as Rapporteur on *Call for a Council of Europe Summit to defend and promote democratic security in Europe*;
 - Mr Attila Korodi (Romania, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur for opinion on *Towards a democratic approach to the issues of governance in European multinational States*;
 - Mr Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE) as Rapporteur for opinion on *Drafting social indicators and issuing an annual report on social rights*;

and heard from them all declarations of absence of any conflict of interest;

- called for candidates for report on the *Evaluation of the Partnership for democracy status in respect of the Parliament of Jordan*;
- decided to request the extension of the validity of the report on *Political transition in Egypt* until 30 April 2018;

– **Authorisations by the Committee:**

- agreed that Mr Andrea Rigoni (Italy, ALDE) participate, in the context of the preparation of his report on the *Situation in Belarus*, at no cost to the Assembly, in a conference on *National Parliaments' role in improving freedom, independence, transparency and diversity of media*, organised by the Sub-Committee on Media and Information Society and hosted by the British Parliament at the House of Commons in London on 11 April 2016;
- agreed to a request by Mr Axel Fischer (Germany, EPP/CD) to carry out a fact-finding visit to Kazakhstan in the framework of the preparation of his report on *The relations of the Council of Europe with Kazakhstan*, subject to the authorisation of the Bureau of the Assembly;

– **Changes in the composition of Sub-Committees:** approved the following changes:

- Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD:

Mr Tobias Zech (Germany, EPP/CD) to become alternate to Mr Karl-Georg Wellman (Germany, EPP/CD);
- Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World:

Mr Guto Bebb (United Kingdom, EC) and Mr Alex Salmond (United Kingdom, NR) to become members, it being understood that delegations with more than one full member in a given Sub-Committee would make available the extra places should a delegation less represented in that Sub-Committee submit a candidate;

– **Other business:**

- took note that, on 3 March 2016, the Bureau of the Assembly authorised Mr Andrea Rigoni (Italy, ALDE), Rapporteur on the *Situation in Belarus*, to participate in the international conference on “Death penalty: Transcending the Divide”, in Minsk, 10 March 2016, organised by the United Nations Development Programme in Belarus, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus and with support from the British Embassy in Minsk;
- heard a statement by Mr Volodymyr Ariev, Chairperson of the Ukrainian delegation to the Assembly, on the situation of Ms Nadiia Savchenko, including a call to sign a petition in support of her;

- **Next meetings:** confirmed the forthcoming meetings as follows:
- Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 2nd part-session, 18-22 April 2016
 - Paris, 24-25 May 2016
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 3rd part-session, 20-24 June 2016
 - Reykjavik, 26 September 2016
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 4th part-session, 10-14 October 2016
 - Paris, 7 November 2016
 - Paris, 15 December 2016.

D. Chatzivassiliou, J. Ary, P. Chevtchenko, S. Arzilli

cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
Director General, Director and all staff of the Secretariat of the Assembly
Secretaries of National Delegations and of Political Groups of the Assembly
Secretaries of observer and partner for democracy delegations
Secretary General of the Congress
Secretary to the Committee of Ministers
Directors General
Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Director of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights
Director of Communication
Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe