



SECRETARIAT

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25 April 2016

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meetings held in Strasbourg from 18 to 21 April 2016

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Strasbourg from 18 to 21 April 2016, with Mr Mogens Jensen (Denmark, SOC) in the Chair:

Monday 18 April 2016, 14:00 – 15:00, room 9, as regards:

- **Draft minutes:** after approving the minutes of the meeting held in Paris on 8 March 2016, decided to declassify the addendum related to the exchange of views on *The state of democracy and the rule of law in Poland*;
- **Statement by the Chairperson on current issues:** heard a statement by the Chairperson on current issues, including the terrorist attacks in Brussels, the escalation of violence in Nagorno-Karabakh, the political consequences of the migration crisis for Europe, and the “Panama papers”;
- **Debate under urgent procedure: After the Brussels attacks, urgent need to address security failures and step up counter-terrorism co-operation:** appointed Mr Emanuelis Zingeris (Lithuania, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
- **Renewed commitment in the fight against antisemitism in Europe** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Titus Corlăţean, Romania, SOC*): held an exchange of views with Mr Gilles Winckler, President of the International League against Racism and Anti-Semitism Bas-Rhin (LICRA), and considered and approved the Committee’s opinion;

Tuesday 19 April 2016 2016, 08:30 – 10:00, room 9, as regards:

- **Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Palestinian National Council** (*Rapporteur: Mr Jordi Xuclà, Spain, ALDE*): took position on the four amendments to the draft resolution;
- **Debate under urgent procedure: After the Brussels attacks, urgent need to address security failures and step up counter-terrorism co-operation** (*Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD*): considered a draft report and adopted unanimously a draft resolution;
- **The political transition in Egypt** (*Rapporteur: Ms Deborah Bergamini, Italy, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and approved her request to pay a fact-finding visit to Egypt, subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly;
- **Political developments in Iran** (*Rapporteur: Ms Josette Durrieu, France, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur;

- **Work programme:** called for candidates for report on the *Funding of the Terrorist Group Daesh*, subject to it being referred to the Committee, and decided to appoint a Rapporteur at its next meeting in May 2016;

Tuesday 19 April 2016, 14:00 – 15:30, room 1, as regards:

- **The conflict in Eastern Ukraine: political and human rights concerns:** held a joint hearing with the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and:

. heard statements on the joint fact-finding visit to Kyiv, Dnipropetrovsk and Mariupol from 4 to 7 April 2016, by Ms Kristýna Zelenková (Czech Republic, ALDE), Rapporteur of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy on *Political consequences of the crisis in Ukraine*, and Ms Marieluise Beck (Germany, ALDE), Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights on the *Legal remedies for human rights violations on the Ukrainian territories outside the control of the Ukrainian authorities*;

. held an exchange of views with Mr Nils Muižnieks, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, and Mr Christos Giakoumopoulos, Special Advisor of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Ukraine;

Thursday 21 April 2016, 08:30 – 10:00, room 9, as regards:

- **Establishing genuine parliamentary dialogue with Algeria** (*Rapporteur: Mr René Rouquet, France, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his fact-finding visit to Algeria, 21-23 March 2016, and held an exchange of views with a delegation of members of the Algerian Parliament;

- **Debate under urgent procedure: After the Brussels attacks, urgent need to address security failures and step up counter-terrorism co-operation** (*Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD*): took position on the 17 amendments and three sub-amendments to the draft resolution;

- **Work programme (continued):**

. appointed Ms Josette Durrieu (France, SOC) as Rapporteur on the *Evaluation of the Partnership for democracy status in respect of the Parliament of Jordan* and heard from her a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;

. agreed to the proposal of Ms Anne Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE) to ask the Bureau of the Assembly to be seized for opinion on the report on the *Compatibility of Sharia law with the European Convention on Human Rights: can States Parties to the Convention be signatories of the “Cairo Declaration”?*, which is being prepared by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights;

- **Situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Andrea Rigoni, Italy, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his visit to Brussels, 2-3 March 2016, his participation in the conferences on *Death penalty: Transcending the Divide*, Minsk, 10 March 2016, and on *National Parliaments’ role in improving freedom, independence, transparency and diversity of media*, London, 11 April 2016;

- **The relations of the Council of Europe with Kazakhstan** (*Rapporteur: Mr Axel Fischer, Germany, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and held an exchange of views with a delegation of members of the Kazakhstan Parliament;

- **Authorisations by the Committee:** authorised Ms Birutė Vésaitė (Lithuania, SOC), Rapporteur on *The activities of the OECD in 2016-2017*, to participate in the OECD Forum which will be held in Paris from 31 May to 1 June 2016;

- **Changes in the composition of the Sub-Committees:** agreed to the request that Mr Attila Korodi (Romania, EPP/CD) replaces Mr Corneliu Cozmanciuc (Romania, EPP/CD) as alternate to Mr Florin Iordache (Romania, SOC), in the Sub-Committee on External Relations;

– **Other business:**

. agreed to the request of Mr Michele Nicoletti (Italy, SOC), Rapporteur on *Call for a Council of Europe Summit to defend and promote democratic security in Europe*, to consult, by way of letter, all national delegations to the Assembly in regard to the holding of a next summit of heads of State and of government of member States of the Council of Europe;

. took note that one of the next meetings of the Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD will take place at the OECD headquarters in Paris, on 12 September 2016;

. decided to transmit to the Bureau of the Assembly the request for the extension until 31 December 2016 of the reference on the *Political consequences of the crisis in Ukraine*;

. took note that the deadline for submitting candidates for the Vaclav Havel Prize was 30 April 2016 (subsequently extended until 30 June 2016);

– **Next meetings:** took note of the draft programme and practical information concerning the meeting of the Committee in Iceland on 26 September 2016, and noted the forthcoming meetings as follows:

- Council of Europe Office, Paris, 24 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 (tbc)
- Paris, 15 December 2016.

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The **Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World** (of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy), meeting in Strasbourg on 20 April 2016, with Mr Titus Corlăţean (Romania, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:

– **Situation in the Middle East:** held an exchange of views with the observer delegation of the Knesset and the partner for democracy delegations of the Palestinian National Council and of the Jordanian Parliament;

– **Future work:** considered the possibility of holding a meeting in Tunis (Tunisia);

– **Date and place of the next meeting:** left it to the Chairperson to convene its next meeting.

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