



SECRETARIAT

AS/PoI (2018) CB 04

25 May 2018

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meeting held in Athens, Greece on 22 May 2018

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Athens, Greece, on 22 May 2018, with Ms Ria Oomen-Ruijten (Netherlands, EPP/CD) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Opening session** with the participation of Mr Michele Nicoletti, President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and representatives of the host country:
 - heard a welcome address by Mr Nikolaos Voutsis, President of the Hellenic Parliament, and welcoming words by Ms Ioanneta Kavvadia, Chairperson of the Greek delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly;
 - held an exchange of views with Mr Dimítrios Vítsas, Greek Migration Policy Minister;
 - held an exchange of views with Mr Giorgos Katrougalos, Greek Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- **Assessing political consequences of foreign funding of Islam in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Ms Doris Fiala, Switzerland, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on her fact-finding visit to London on 15 May 2018;
- **Establishment of an academic network on Council of Europe conventions against corruption:** upon a proposal by Mr Michele Nicoletti, President of the Assembly and former Rapporteur on *Promoting integrity in governance to tackle political corruption*, adopted a [statement](#) on the establishment of an academic network on Council of Europe conventions against corruption, and held an exchange of views with Ms Maria Gavouneli, Head of the delegation of Greece to the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) and Associate Professor of International Law at the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens;
- **Protecting and supporting the victims of terrorism** (*Rapporteur: Ms Marietta Karamanli, France, SOC*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, held a hearing with the participation of Mr Travis Frain, Westminster attack survivor and member of the UK network *Survivors against Terror*, Ms Susanne Gentz, Diplomatic Adviser, Europe and Central Asia, Policy and Humanitarian Diplomacy Division, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and Ms Mary Bossis, Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations at the University of Piraeus, Greece;
- **The situation in Syria and its effects upon surrounding countries** (*Rapporteur: Ms Theodora Bakoyannis, Greece, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur, including a declaration of absence of any conflict of interest, held an exchange of views with Mr Sotirios Roussos, Associate Professor at the University of Peloponnisos, Greece, and considered an introductory memorandum;

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- **The political transition in Egypt:** following the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs' decision on 15 May 2018, to deprive Mr Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE) of the right to act as a committee Rapporteur for a period of two years, pursuant to paragraph 27 of the Code of Conduct for members of the Parliamentary Assembly, appointed Lord Blencathra (United Kingdom, EC) as Rapporteur, heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest, and decided to request an extension of reference in order to prepare a new draft report;
- **Compatibility of Sharia Law with the European Convention on Human Rights: can States Parties to the Convention be signatories of the "Cairo Declaration"?** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Ms Anne Brasseur, Luxembourg, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur for opinion, held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms Maria Giannakaki, Secretary General for Human Rights and Transparency at the Greek Ministry of Justice, and with Mr Yannis Ktistakis, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Law of Democritus University of Thrace, Greece;
- **Open discussion on current issues:** held an exchange of views on the recent events which took place in Gaza;
- **Next meetings:** decided on forthcoming meetings as follows:
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 3rd part-session, 25-29 June 2018
 - Paris, 11 September 2018
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 4th part-session, 8-12 October 2018
 - Dubrovnik, 6 November 2018 (*ad hoc* Sub-Committee to participate in the Conference on "Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, Shared responsibility")
 - Paris, 11 December 2018.

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cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
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