



SECRETARIAT

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13 September 2018

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 11 September 2018

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Paris on 11 September 2018 with Ms Ria Oomen-Ruijten (Netherlands, EPP/CD) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Regulating foreign funding of Islam in Europe in order to prevent radicalisation and Islamophobia** (*Rapporteur: Ms Doris Fiala, Switzerland, ALDE*): approved a report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;
- **The evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco** (*Rapporteur: Mr Bogdan Klich, Poland, EPP/CD*): approved a report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;
- **Activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)** (*Rapporteur: Mr Hendrik Daems, Belgium, ALDE*): held a hearing with the participation of Mr Marek Dabrowski, Non-Resident Fellow at Bruegel, Brussels, Professor at the Higher School of Economics, Moscow, and Fellow at CASE – Center for Social and Economic Research, Warsaw; considered an introductory memorandum; decided to change the title of the report as follows: *Promoting democracy by developing market economy: does the EBRD model work?*; and decided to request to the Bureau of the Assembly an extension of the reference until 30 April 2019;
- **Democracy hacked? How to respond?** (*Rapporteur: Mr Frithjof Schmidt, Germany, SOC*): held a hearing with the participation of Ms Divina Frau-Meigs, Professor, sociologist and media researcher, University Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, and Mr Ben Scott, member of the management board of the think tank Stiftung Neue Verantwortung, Director of Policy & Advocacy at the Omidyar Network, and former co-ordinator of technology and innovation policy advisers for the Hillary Clinton campaign in 2016 (via videoconference); and considered an outline for report;
- **Role and mission of the Parliamentary Assembly: main challenges for the future** (*Rapporteur: Mr Tiny Kox, Netherlands, UEL*): considered an introductory memorandum;
- **Open discussion on current issues:**
 - heard a statement by Ms Arpine Hovhannisyan (Armenia, EPP/CD) on recent developments regarding independence of the judiciary and of the legislature in Armenia and asked its Chairperson to write to the Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee to inform him accordingly;
 - was informed by Lord Foulkes (United Kingdom, SOC) on investigations of the attempted assassination of Mr Skripal and his daughter in Salisbury;

- was informed by Mr Kais Zayadin (Jordan) of the negative consequences for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees in the near east (UNRWA) after the United States announced that it will provide no additional funding;
- was informed by Mr Bernard Sabella (Palestine) on the decision of the USA administration to close the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) representation in Washington;

– **Future work:**

- appointed Mr Hendrik Daems (Belgium, ALDE) as Rapporteur on *Setting minimum standards for electoral systems in order to offer the basis for free and fair elections* subject to hearing from him a declaration of non-conflict of interest;
- in the absence of candidate, decided to postpone the appointment of a Rapporteur for opinion on *Compatibility of Sharia Law with the European Convention on Human Rights: can States Parties to the Convention be signatories of the “Cairo Declaration”?*;
- took note of the programme of the World Forum for Democracy on *Women’s participation in public and political affairs* (Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018); proposed that Mr José Cepeda (Spain, SOC) and Ms Ioanneta Kavvadia (Greece, UEL) be appointed to the *ad hoc* Committee of the Bureau to participate in the Forum; and encouraged other members to put forward their candidatures;
- took note of the preliminary draft programme and the practical information for the Conference on “Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, Shared responsibility” which will take place in Dubrovnik, Croatia, on 6 November 2018, and appointed the following members to the *ad hoc* Sub-Committee:
 - Mr Ervin Bushati (SOC) Albania
 - Mr Hendrik Daems (ALDE) Belgium
 - Mr Dirk Van Der Maelen (SOC) Belgium
 - Ms Ioanneta Kavvadia (UEL) Greece
 - Mr Emanuelis Zingeris (EPP/CD) Lithuania
 - Mr Jason Azzopardi (EPP/CD) Malta
 - Mr Włodzimierz Bernacki (EC) Poland
 - Mr Tuğrul Türkes (EC) Turkey
 - Mr Oleksii Goncharenko (EC) Ukraine
 - Mr Phil Wilson (SOC) United Kingdom;
- Meeting of the Sub-Committee on External Relations, UN Headquarters, New York: took note that this meeting would be held from 3/4 to 7 December 2018 (to be confirmed), subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly;

– **Authorisations by the Committee:**

- authorised Mr Jordi Roca (Spain, EPP/CD), Rapporteur on *The situation in Kosovo*^{*}, to carry out a first fact-finding visit to the region, in the framework of the preparation of his report, subject to availability of funds;
- approved the request by Mr Adão Silva (Portugal, EPP/CD), Rapporteur on *Strengthening co-operation with the United Nations* to carry out a fact finding visit to New York, in the framework of the preparation of his report and in the margin of the meeting of the Sub-Committee on External Relations, subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly and to availability of funds;

^{*} Throughout this text, all reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

- authorised Mr Frithjof Schmidt (Germany, SOC), Rapporteur on *Democracy hacked? How to respond?*, to pay a fact-finding visit combining a visit to the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence (StratCom COE) in Riga (Latvia), and a visit to the electoral authorities in Stockholm (Sweden) and Oslo (Norway), in the framework of the preparation of his report, subject to availability of funds;
 - authorised Dame Cheryl Gillan (United Kingdom, EC), Rapporteur on *Updating guidelines to ensure fair referendums in Council of Europe member States*, to participate in the next meeting of the Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission, which will take place in Venice on 13 December 2018, in the framework of the preparation of her report, subject to availability of funds;
- **Other business:** was informed by the Chairperson that, in light of this year's exceptional circumstances, it had been agreed with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to forego, in 2018, the report and enlarged debate on the activities of the OECD being understood that the OECD and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe would pursue their longstanding and valued co-operation in order to schedule in due time activities for 2019;
- **Changes in the composition of the Sub-Committees:** approved the following changes:
- Sub-Committee on the Middle East and Arab World
 - Ms Jutta Urpilainen (Finland, SOC) becomes member
 - Sub-Committee on External Relations
 - Ms Sofio Katsarava (Georgia, SOC) becomes member
 - Ms Olena Sotnyk (Ukraine, ALDE) becomes member with Mr Oleksii Goncharenko (EC) as her Alternate;
- **Next meetings:**
- 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")
 - New York, 3/4 to 7 December 2018 (Sub-Committee on External Relations), subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly
 - Paris, 11 December 2018.

D. Chatzivassiliou, J. Ary, A. Salanson

cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
 Directors 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