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## 2019 ORDINARY SESSION

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(Second part)

### REPORT

Seventeenth sitting

Thursday 11 April 2019 at 3.30 p.m.

In this report:

1. Speeches in English are reported in full.
2. Speeches in other languages are reported using the interpretation and are marked with an asterisk
3. The text of the amendments is available at the document centre and on the Assembly's website. Only oral amendments or oral sub-amendments are reproduced in the report of debates.
4. Speeches in German and Italian are reproduced in full in a separate document.
5. Corrections should be handed in at Room 1059A not later than 24 hours after the report has been circulated.

The contents page for this sitting is given at the end of the report.

*(Mr Nick, Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair at 3.40 p.m.)*

The PRESIDENT – The sitting is open.

### **1. Announcement of 2019 Europe Prize**

The PRESIDENT – I am pleased to announce the winner of the Europe Prize 2019. There were six finalists: Donostia/San Sebastián in Spain, Bamberg in Germany, Bolesławiec in Poland, Issy-les-Moulineaux in France, Izmir in Turkey and Münster in Germany. The winner of the Europe Prize 2019 is Donostia/San Sebastián in Spain. We offer our congratulations to Donostia/San Sebastián for its engagement with Europe.

### **2. Laundromats: responding to new challenges in the international fight against organised crime, corruption and money laundering**

The PRESIDENT – The first item of business this afternoon is the debate on the report titled “Laundromats: responding to new challenges in the international fight against organised crime, corruption and money laundering”, Document 14847, with an addendum, presented by Mr Mart van de Ven on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

I call Mr van de Ven, the rapporteur. You have 13 minutes in total, which you may divide between presentation of the report and reply to the debate.

Mr VAN DE VEN (*Netherlands*) – This might look like a report on dry, technical issues, but in reality, it is about our fundamental values. It is about how to protect the rule of law, human rights and democracy against dangerous, destructive forces – forces that have already damaged even this Assembly, in the institutional home of European democracy.

Corruption undermines people’s confidence in public bodies, and populists exploit that scepticism to attack democratic institutions. We are seeing this right now in many Council of Europe member States. Organised crime is a danger in its own right, but it is also a corruptive force. Sooner or later, organised criminals, with their huge financial resources, seek to influence public life through public offices. That, too, undermines democracy. Corruption and organised crime depend on international money laundering. Both are motivated by greed for money, but the origin of that money must be concealed before it can be spent. International money laundering is also a way of protecting dirty money from unlawful seizure by the authorities or removing it from risky financial systems and hiding it in safer, foreign jurisdictions. Without money laundering, it becomes much more difficult to conceal corruption and organised crime and even more difficult to enjoy the spoils. The prevention of money laundering is one of the best ways to fight organised crime and corruption.

Over the past couple of years, a number of very large-scale international money laundering schemes have come to light. The three best-known ones are the Global Laundromat, with its core in the Russian Federation and the Republic of Moldova; the Azerbaijani Laundromat, based in Azerbaijan; and the Troika Laundromat, administered by Troika Dialog bank in the Russian Federation. Those three distinct schemes provide the factual context of my report. All three were based on large-scale leaks of financial and other records and the work of investigative journalists and NGOs. Some of the information came from whistle-blowers. This underlines once again the importance of free, independent media and civil society and of effective whistle-blower protection.

All three Laundromats involved persons or agencies close to the heart of power. In Azerbaijan, this included family members of the president, of government ministers and of senior civil servants – even of the head of Azerbaijan’s anti-corruption authority. Money was sent abroad via the State-owned International Bank of Azerbaijan. In the Russian Federation, the cousin of the president and one of his closest friends were involved. The Russian State security service was also involved, as well as businessmen whose companies enjoyed enormous State contracts. There is every indication that the structures established for such individuals – “politically exposed persons” in the language of anti-money laundering – were intended to transfer proceeds of corruption.

The report of IBAC – the independent investigative body on allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly – describes how the Azerbaijani Laundromat was used by Azerbaijani politicians to send Azerbaijani money to Assembly members, apparently to promote Azerbaijani State interests. That is a clear example, from our own painful experience, of the damage that money laundering can do to democratic institutions.

National efforts to investigate these allegations have been mixed. Extensive, coherent information on what is happening in the Russian Federation is hard to obtain. From what I have seen, action against money laundering in general is disjointed and spasmodic. There does not seem to have been any concerted investigation of the Global Laundromat in particular. Even worse, the Moldovan authorities report that the Russian Federation has actively obstructed their attempts to co-operate on investigation of the Global Laundromat. The Republic of Moldova itself has made some progress, mainly at the level of the corrupt judges and other officials who facilitated the scheme.

The wider picture in the Republic of Moldova is alarming. The July 2018 fiscal amnesty allows assets to be regularised without proof of origin on payment of a 3% tax. That looks very much like an official money laundering scheme. Combined with the Republic of Moldova's "golden passport" scheme and its visa-free travel to the Schengen area, the Russian Federation and Turkey, this creates a money-laundering problem across Europe. This is not the only sign that public life in the Republic of Moldova is influenced by organised crime. Persons strongly suspected – even convicted – of organised crime and money laundering are able to seek and obtain public office. Veaceslav Platon, named as one of the architects of the Global Laundromat, has been both a local councillor and a member of parliament. Ilan Shor, who has been connected to the Global Laundromat and other serious crimes, was elected to parliament while appealing against a conviction and a seven-and-a-half-year prison sentence for money laundering.

In 2017, Assembly Resolution 2185 called on the Azerbaijani authorities to start an independent and impartial inquiry into the Azerbaijani Laundromat and its use to corrupt Assembly members. I am not aware of anything having been done.

The three Laundromats had two important features in common: the use of banks in the Baltic States, and the use of shell companies based in the United Kingdom and its overseas territories. Trasta Komerbanka and ABLV Bank in Latvia both played key parts in the Global Laundromat. The former was closed down by the European Central Bank. The latter was liquidated by the Latvian authorities, which are still struggling to implement reforms recommended by international regulators. Latvia has made progress since its vulnerabilities were exposed, but there is certainly still more to be done. In Lithuania, Ūkio Bank was central to the Troika Laundromat. It had already been closed down before the Troika Laundromat was exposed, but the closure of one bank does not mean that systemic issues have been resolved.

Estonia seems to have been the most extensively exploited of the Baltic States. The scandal of Danske Bank's Estonian branch made worldwide headlines and is still far from being resolved. It is now apparent that other international banks were involved – notably Swedbank, the largest in the Baltic region. The extent of the Swedbank scandal is still emerging.

The problems in the Baltic States' banking systems are the result of various issues, including their geographical location and historical connections to the former Soviet Union, inadequate anti-money laundering regulation at domestic and international level, and problems of co-ordination and co-operation between domestic actors and their international counterparts. More work is needed at all levels to be sure that the problems are solved.

The other key link for all three Laundromats was the United Kingdom, along with its overseas territories and Crown dependencies. Shell companies with non-transparent ownership in places, such as the British Virgin Islands, concealed the origin of laundered money. Limited partnerships in the United Kingdom gave a veneer of respectability to the ownership of assets, allowing bank accounts to be opened without arousing suspicions. British professionals, such as trust and corporate service providers, helped set them up.

These huge Laundromat schemes operated even though national and international authorities have been working to prevent money laundering for decades. The OECD, through its Financial Action Task Force, and regional bodies such as the Council of Europe's Moneyval have established detailed anti-money laundering standards. Those standards should be applied in every Council of Europe member State. Every European country should have specialised services, including a financial intelligence unit, to monitor and respond to money-laundering risks.

And yet we still have the Laundromats. Clearly more must be done to prevent money laundering and protect our democratic systems and the rule of law. There has been progress. Banks have been investigated, some have been closed and criminal inquiries have been opened. Reports have been published and reforms introduced. The Russian Federation and Azerbaijan, and to a certain extent the Republic of Moldova, may have failed to act, but the Baltic States, the United Kingdom and the European Union have all taken significant steps. The draft resolution presented by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights recognises,

welcomes and encourages that, but it cannot be a whitewash. The resolution goes on to identify remaining shortcomings and propose further action – a large part of its added value. I hope sincerely that you will support it.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr van de Ven. You have three and a half minutes remaining.

We now come to the debate, in which I shall first call the spokespersons on behalf of the political groups. I call Mr Masłowski.

Mr MASŁOWSKI (*Poland, Spokesperson for the European Conservatives Group*) – On behalf of my group, I thank the rapporteur for this important report and the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for its hard work and high level of commitment.

Corruption, organised crime and money laundering are serious and growing threats to the rule of law and are obstacles to democratic and economic development, as noted in the report. The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights is deeply concerned about the extent of money laundering involving Council of Europe member States, notably the recent examples known as the Global Laundromat and the Azerbaijani Laundromat. The scale, duration and reach of the Global and Azerbaijani money-laundering schemes suggest possible weaknesses in national, regional and international mechanisms for combating money laundering by organised criminal groups and others. The report therefore calls on the Parliamentary Assembly to inquire into these issues with a view to making possible recommendations for enhancing national mechanisms and international co-operation to fight money laundering.

Let us look at national anti-money laundering supervisory regimes more generally. Transparency International has highlighted insufficient national legal frameworks and poor enforcement. In its survey of 23 G20 countries and guest countries, Transparency International found that 11 of them have weak or average legal frameworks for identifying the beneficial ownership of companies and trusts. Fifteen countries relied on information on beneficial ownership collected by financial institutions and other obliged professionals, despite experience having revealed negligence and complicity.

Transparency International has called for public, central registers of beneficial ownership. It welcomed as setting new standards the recent European Union fifth directive on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing – known as the anti-money laundering directive – and the requirement that the British overseas territories establish public registers of beneficial ownership.

It is most important that other countries follow the new rules and mechanisms, to avoid a situation in which money launderers simply move to them. Effective international co-operation between national investigative and regulatory agencies will be essential if the full extent of the Global Laundromat is to be clarified and those responsible for criminal conduct punished. I hope we will adopt the text, and that together we do whatever we can and everything possible to fight organised crime, corruption and money laundering.

Ms de BRUIJN-WEZEMAN (*Netherlands, Spokesperson for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe*) – I thank Mr van de Ven for his excellent report on a very worrying matter. Let me say it more explicitly: it is an unacceptable situation that is undermining human rights, democracy and the rule of law in the most cynical way.

The rapporteur has shown that money laundering takes place on a large scale, that a huge amount of money is involved, and that this is a serious threat because of how it facilitates, encourages and conceals corruption and other criminal activity. Corruption at a high level leads to human rights violations and affects the independence and impartiality of justice. It leads to the buying of power and influence, which is used to buy off judicial prosecution, among other things. This creates a self-sustaining system against which insufficient action has been taken, until now.

It is clear that corruption and laundromats undermine trust in the rule of law, particularly among those inhabitants of our member States who pay their taxes and so contribute to such important public services as education and healthcare. Especially in countries with substantial corruption and money laundering, the quality of public services stays poor. Money laundering is an issue not only for those countries, though; a widespread infrastructure supports the laundering system. Almost daily, we are confronted by reports of money laundering and its consequences. The Assembly is strongly acquainted with corrupt activities, which have undeniably caused damage to this Organisation. Mr van de Ven mentioned by name in the report some of the important players, but I am afraid this is only the tip of a huge iceberg.

Last summer, ING bank in the Netherlands was convicted and fined €775 million for serious negligence and not acting in compliance with the anti-money laundering regime. This was a wake-up call for my country and for the Dutch Parliament. The anti-money laundering standards were not adequately implemented in the organisation of the bank, and the financial supervisory system failed. The report, therefore, could not come at a better time. On behalf of ALDE, I welcome this important report, which calls on all parties involved to undertake multiple actions in the battle against money laundering and corruption.

Ms BRYNJÓLFSDÓTTIR (*Iceland, Spokesperson for the Group of the Unified European Left*) – I welcome the report on money laundromats and congratulate the rapporteur and secretariat for their work on it.

Money laundering is probably one of the biggest threats to democratic values and principles. It involves large sums of money from wealthy businessmen, organised criminals and high-level officials. It is also a staple of organised criminal networks, corrupt officials and terrorism. The siphoning-off of taxpayers' money weakens the State apparatus and systems that rely heavily on tax income, such as welfare and healthcare. Corruption among politicians targets our fundamental political system.

Recent examples of vast money-laundering schemes include the Global Laundromat, which involved corrupt Moldovan judges and the transfer of between \$21 billion and \$80 billion from the Russian Federation, Russian businessmen, organised criminals and interests connected to the FSB. The Azerbaijani Laundromat contributed to corrupt activities within the Parliament Assembly. It involved \$2.9 billion from Azerbaijan, mostly laundered through the Estonia branch of Danske Bank. Neither of those cases has been adequately investigated by national authorities, although both involved criminals, businessmen and high-level officials using shell companies in the United Kingdom and its overseas territories exploiting poorly regulated banks in Latvia and Estonia.

We obviously need to strengthen our mechanisms for identifying and countering money laundering. The case of Danske Bank proves how deficient our anti-money laundering procedures are. For some reason, Danske Bank decided not to apply the same information technology in its Baltic activities as it applied in its operations elsewhere. Many documents in the Estonian branch were in Russian, which was not understood in the head office. The branch was basically a front that offered financial services for residents.

Banks have responsibilities – they need to apply certain procedures and strengthen their anti-money laundering offices – but member States also need to take action by strengthening anti-money laundering institutions and securing their proper funding, by publishing declarations of the property and income of public officials, and by preventing those convicted of corruption from running for office. That is a huge challenge.

Money laundering poses a serious threat to democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It transcends State borders, so we need to work together to counter money laundering and at the same time fight organised crime and corruption.

Ms ENGBLOM (*Sweden, Spokesperson for the Group of the European People's Party*) – This is dirty business. Illegal money laundering, even in its mildest form, deprives our hard-working citizens of their tax money, which should be used for healthcare and education but in its dirty format funds trafficking and the smuggling of drugs and weapons. It funds organised crime, terrorism and corruption, which are all serious threats to our citizens, societies and democracies. No-one goes unharmed; illegal activities know no boundaries or borders.

As we speak, a large-scale banking scandal, involving money laundering with Russian ties, is unfolding in my own country, Sweden. I feel heartbroken for all those affected, and mad deep down to the bone. This must not happen.

On behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, I thank the rapporteur, Mr van de Ven, for his thorough work in describing and mapping these intricate illegal activities. I express our full support for the report and its recommendations to member States, some of which have been mentioned, to financial institutions, to the European Union and also to we parliamentarians. I also want to express my appreciation for the way that the report is written. It is very straightforward – no beating about the bush. There are clear recommendations about what needs to be done.

I would like to emphasise one recommendation in particular. We have spent a large part of this part-session, and we will do the same again in future, discussing Russian misconduct and probable budget cuts for the Council of Europe. As the report states, it is fundamental that national and international activities and co-operation to counter money laundering are prioritised and safeguarded, regardless of the future budgetary

situation. That is vital for the confidence of us parliamentarians and for this institution, especially in light of what the Council of Europe has experienced in recent years, which needs to be taken as a lesson learned in “resetting” the Council of Europe.

This report is far from boring – it is a page-turner.

Lord ANDERSON (*United Kingdom, spokesperson for the Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group*) – Our rapporteur is an unusual, indeed remarkable, combination – he is a professional accountant, but he is also a campaigner with incredible energy.

We were first alerted to this problem with the revelations of the Panama scandal. Now, of course, we know that in the 1990s a vast amount of dirty money from the Russian Federation flowed westwards and that the defences we had were insufficient to withstand that tidal wave of Russian money. The Nordic countries are normally thought of as being the premier division of clean countries, but alas we have had the activities of the Estonian branch of Danske Bank, which were revealed last month, and we now have the reports about Swedbank in Sweden, which is the largest bank in the Baltic region. By Swedbank’s own admission, over a decade €135 billion came from people in the Russian Federation and elsewhere – not all of it dirty, of course. All of this has caused great reputational damage both to the banks and to the countries involved.

Of course, London is one of the world’s major financial centres, so I will say a few words about it to put things into perspective. Property in England worth more than £100 billion is owned by anonymous foreign companies, registered in tax havens; of course, not all of them are dirty. Nevertheless, criminals and corrupt politicians can use property to hide money from scrutiny.

The good news, of course, is that much is being done in the United Kingdom to counter this activity, a lot of it on an all-party basis. I praise my parliamentary colleagues Andrew Mitchell, who is a Conservative MP, and Margaret Hodge, a Labour MP. They have worked together tirelessly on this matter. For example, there is now a public register of the beneficial ownership of land in the United Kingdom. There is also a date set for a register of land in the overseas territories, such as the British Virgin Islands. The same approach was attempted by this all-party coalition in respect of the Crown dependencies, such as Jersey, Guernsey, the Isle of Man and so on, but two or three weeks ago that was blocked by the government. Nevertheless, my colleagues will return to the fray. There are also unexplained wealth orders, the first of which has already been used against an Azerbaijani woman.

Money laundering is a major threat to democracy. There is increasing realisation of its scale and of the need for international co-operation to counter it. Let us congratulate our rapporteur, but we must also remain vigilant. As more stones are turned over, more evidence will be unearthed.

The PRESIDENT – That completes the list of speakers on behalf of the political groups. The rapporteur will reply at the end of the debate, but do you want to respond at this stage, Mr van de Ven? That is not the case.

We shall therefore move on to the general list of speakers. I call first Mr Herkel.

Mr HERKEL (*Estonia*) – I have two reasons to speak about this report. First, Danske Bank in Estonia is also about my country of Estonia. Criticism is justified, given that the anti-money laundering mechanisms were too weak, and there was probably even too much trust with regard to Scandinavian banks. Unfortunately, new questions are already being asked about Swedbank. Secondly, I was for a very long time the rapporteur on Azerbaijan and afterwards Chair of the Monitoring Committee. Now that period is being described with terms such as “caviar diplomacy” and the “Azeri Laundromat”. Back then, we did not know those terms or nicknames. What actually happened during that period was that from time to time I was astonished by how positive the attitudes of many colleagues were with regard to Azerbaijan, where clearly there are problems about democracy and the rule of law, and problems with journalists, elections and so on. Thereafter, it was revealed that there are clearly cases of political corruption and that money was transferred even via the bank acting in my country.

There is responsibility for this issue at an individual level, and among particular politicians who were involved with these dirty schemes. But they are not the only ones who are responsible. Unfortunately, we ourselves did not reveal all that happened here in the Parliamentary Assembly. There was Mr Gerald Knaus and the European Stability Initiative, which started to publish allegations, and thereafter it became a big scandal here in the Assembly and in many countries, in relation to particular politicians.

Of course, my next question is about the responsibility of the countries. The transfer country is responsible, yes, but the initiators of money laundering – corrupt countries – are also responsible. Mr Omtzigt asked a very good question on Monday of Mr Soini, who did not answer it. Mr Omtzigt said that if we are speaking about corruption cases, what about the second half of corruption, which is the other country – the member State itself? This question is still open.

Mr KITEV (*North Macedonia*) – In light of the recent high-profile scandals in several European banks, it is clear that the European Union, together with the Council of Europe, should adopt further measures against money laundering. The failure to prevent money laundering endangers the European project. The cases provide an unsettling reminder of banks' capacity to threaten European unity through individually profitable but institutionally destructive acts of greed. Although the European Union has strengthened its anti-money laundering rules and regulations, enforcement by national regulators in member States has been inconsistent. How is Europe to fulfil the global role it envisions for itself as a regulatory superpower if it is unable to regulate even European financial champions? What good are instruments such as the European Union's new investment screening mechanism if politically exposed persons and state-owned firms anywhere can freely disguise their ownership of European assets?

In some cases, supervisory bodies reacted only after third parties took special measures, undermining the integrity and reputation of the European Union financial system as a whole. European financial regulators have increasingly appeared to be in a similar position to European militaries – under-resourced and consequently dependent on American power. National authorities do not take appropriate action, and fines are often too low. Most importantly, high-profile financial institutions and their senior management seem untouchable. The need to improve co-operation between national authorities is clear. Co-operation and information sharing should happen throughout the various phases of the supervisory processes, and there should be standards that require firms to control risks and hold adequate capital. Nevertheless, the European Union should have more responsibility when it comes to money laundering involving financial institutions in member States. Europe must address the huge variation in the transparency of national anti-money laundering regimes and the severity of the fines they impose. Europe's jumble of regulations, directives and practices makes it extremely difficult to determine which countries are getting it right.

Lord BALFE (*United Kingdom*) – May I begin by congratulating the rapporteur on a splendid forensic piece of work? People sometimes wonder why everybody has lost faith in democracy. This report illustrates why. We could stop money laundering in the great electronic world that we live in if we had the willpower to do it, but we do not. Ordinary people look at politicians and ask, "Where is their willpower? Do they really want to stop things?" This is a serious point that we have to address. The report shows the impoverishment of ordinary people because their money is being stolen. We are dealing with largely stolen goods. The money would not need to be hidden if it was legitimate and above board. The report shows exactly how complex this all is.

I will concentrate on the United Kingdom, which gets the biggest mention of all the European Union countries, in paragraphs 45 to 54. The report says that "the National Crime Agency estimates that 'many hundreds of billions of pounds' are laundered through United Kingdom banks each year." For goodness' sake, what have British governments been doing for the last 20 or 30 years? They are belatedly waking up, but even so, as my good friend Lord Anderson said, the bill that was going to deal with crown dependencies was withdrawn from the House of Commons by the present government. The overseas territories are implicated in money laundering, as laid out in paragraph 53, which says, "The authorities of the Cayman Islands, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands and Gibraltar are reported to have reacted angrily, claiming the Act" – that is the United Kingdom Act – "undermines long-established autonomy and threatens their important financial sectors." In other words, it threatens their ability to hide money laundering and to abet criminal activity. Thanks to the stupidity of the British in deciding to leave the European Union, at least it will be a challenge for Spain to sort out Gibraltar, and perhaps we need a few other countries sorted out, too.

I welcome what the rapporteur has to say. The report is useful and a good step forward, but it will mean nothing until member States of the Council of Europe and elsewhere decide they will use the technology they already have to stamp this out. If they do not, they will pay with the ballot box, as people continue to lose faith in what democracy is for.

Mr MARUKYAN (*Armenia*) – I thank the rapporteur Mr van de Ven for his extraordinary work in this report, which raises important issues and targets the reinforcement of the international fight against money laundering, organised crime and corruption. They are serious and growing threats to the rule of law and are obstacles to democratic and economic development in any country. Corruption is one of the main obstacles in the development of institutions in developing countries. Governments around the world must step up their efforts to combat money laundering, through regulations that require financial institutions to put systems in

place to detect and report suspicious activity. According to a 2018 survey from PwC, global money laundering transactions amount to between \$1 trillion to \$2 trillion annually, or between 2% and 5% of global GDP.

On national and international levels, intensive institutional actions must be taken both on the prevention of money laundering and on the effective investigation of cases. It is important to increase transparency by establishing publicly accessible beneficial ownership registers for companies and trusts, to broaden the criteria for assessing high-risk third countries and to ensure a common high level of safeguards for financial flows from such countries, to improve the co-operation and exchange of information between anti-money laundering and financial supervisors and the European Central Bank. Supervisory bodies should make better use of technology to cross-check information, look for patterns and guide on-site inspections, allowing a more effective use of detailed information at transaction level. Supervised entities should improve the quality and quantity of their suspicious transaction reports and maintain a clear audit trail of their client risk assessments.

Analysis of Laundromats and other large-scale money-laundering schemes of recent years identified problems at a national level. Action must be taken to improve the current situation, including passing adequate domestic law and policy on the prevention of corruption. There must be publicly accessible declarations of public officials' property and income, including parliamentarians, government ministers and candidates to elected public office. Necessary steps must be taken to investigate and prosecute money laundering as a third-party or standalone offence, instead of proof of a predicate offence being required. Criminal sentences for money-laundering offences must be sufficiently dissuasive. There must be effective co-operation by national authorities with AML investigations by other countries' authorities. Meanwhile, effective international co-operation between national investigation and regulatory agencies will be essential if the full extent of the global Laundromat is to be clarified and those responsible for criminal conduct are to be punished in all countries.

Mr MOLLAZADE (*Azerbaijan*) – Mr van de Ven's report reminded me of neurological syndrome called hemi-inattention, which is when patients who experience psychological stress lose attention and vision. It is really easy to investigate small countries, such as the Republic of Moldova, Azerbaijan and Estonia, and to focus attention on post-Soviet banks in the Baltic States, but we have information about huge problems in Europe. Frankly, we are dealing with a Euro-laundromat. Ms de Bruijn-Wezeman mentioned a Dutch bank; yesterday in the United States there was a story about Deutsche Bank; there is also the issue of Commerzbank and others.

This is a serious source of political corruption. It is especially serious given that we are on the eve of elections to the European Parliament. People in Europe have really lost confidence in traditional parties. Forces are using this corrupt money to try to intervene in European politics; they are donating to the radical left and radical right, with the goal of creating chaos in Europe and problems for transatlantic co-operation. There should be a serious investigation into that issue. Laundromats are not found only in the Republic of Moldova, Azerbaijan and small, post-Soviet countries. The Laundromat machine is in Europe, and we have to investigate political corruption in many European structures.

I remind colleagues of what happened in a previous part-session: it is a fact that some leaders of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe flew to Syria on a military plane and met Assad. Yet there are investigations of Azerbaijani corruption. Why? It is the same syndrome of hemi-inattention: attack small countries; forget about huge empires. What is the goal? To push us back to the Soviet Union? We should continue serious investigation of corruption and the European Laundromat. It is very important, on the eve of the elections to the European Parliament, that we protect Europe and European values. Of course, corruption should be combated everywhere in the world, but let us start with big countries.

Ms AGHAYEVA (*Azerbaijan*) – Frankly, it was not my intention to speak, but my country has been shown in a negative light, and I am compelled to make the following comments. Azerbaijan is a rapidly developing country in its region. It does its best to implement commitments to developing democracy. The Government of Azerbaijan is constantly taking measures to strengthen the rule of law. The country has been carrying out comprehensive reforms, which aim to form and develop a system to combat and stop activities that create the conditions for the legalisation of any illegally obtained money or property, in accordance with international standards. We are all aware that corruption has no borders, negatively affects economic growth, distorts the allocation of resources in the private sector, weakens public trust in state institutions and, most importantly, hinders a country's democratic, stable development.

Of course, I am not an investigative journalist with the ability to prove these claims, but it is unacceptable to make accusations that are not fully proven in such a serious and influential Organisation. The specific mention of Azerbaijan demonstrates that the accusations were initiated by certain circles who are against Azerbaijan. It would be great to see the same people, be they journalists or so-called human rights activists, talk about the massive violation of the human rights of hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people



and refugees from Azerbaijan, but they are silent on that. For more than 20 years, these individuals have failed to take a principled position on that; it seems that the problem is less attractive to them than raising this matter publicly. Of course, that selective approach brings into question the objectivity of the views that they express. I hope that their policy of double standards and selective approaches will cease, and that there will be a basis for genuine dialogue. I thank colleagues for their attention.

Mr IGITYAN (*Armenia*) – First, I thank the rapporteur. Mr van de Ven did something necessary: he uncovered a phenomenon and gave some examples – perhaps not enough, but it is a very good beginning. I say this to some of the earlier speakers: the report is not against countries, whether mentioned in the report or not. It is not against Azerbaijan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Moldova or other countries. If Armenia was mentioned in such a report, I would be thankful, and would ask you, colleagues, to help us to stop this phenomenon in my country. This corruption and laundering of money is not the strategy of any country. Before, the problem was that money was being hidden from budgets; now the phenomenon has entered all fields where there is any power. We see it in the legislative, executive, judicial, sporting and cultural fields. It is very bad that the phenomenon has entered our Organisation.

It is important that we find the strength to start to talk about this, because if we did not even discuss the issue, there would be distrust of all our previous resolutions. We know that some resolutions have somehow been adopted despite the problems mentioned in this report. Now we have enough political will to stop this, at least in our Organisation, our parliaments, and our member States. We can stop this phenomenon only if we join forces, because corruption, laundering and laundromats do not have borders. If you stop them in your country, they will find other countries. I therefore again thank the rapporteur. All of us are ready to fight this phenomenon together.

Mr AYDIN (*Turkey*) – Let me start by thanking the rapporteur for preparing this important report. He is well aware that globalisation has simply widened, deepened and sped up worldwide interconnectedness. Over the last decades, the sheer scale and scope of global interconnectedness has become evident in every sphere, from economic to cultural. This trend has inevitably brought challenges for the financial system. Globalisation has turned the international financial system into a money launderer's dream, in which billions of dollars a year are siphoned off from economies around the world, extending the reach of organised crime.

This unintended consequence of globalisation presents a serious challenge to law enforcement agencies and financial regulators. Money laundering has become a global problem due to the convergence of several factors, namely growth in international trade, expansion of the global financial system, the lowering of barriers to international travel and the surge in the internalisation of organised crime. All these factors have provided the necessary source, opportunity and means for converting illegal proceeds into what appear to be legitimate funds.

The international community, along with governments and organisations, recognises money laundering as a serious international threat. Money laundering threatens the jurisdictions of governments and organisations from three perspectives. First, at the enforcement level, laundering increases the threat posed by serious crime, such as drug trafficking, racketeering and smuggling, by facilitating the underlying crime and providing funds for reinvestment that allow the criminal enterprise to continue its operations. Secondly, laundering poses a threat from an economic perspective by reducing tax revenues and establishing substantial underground economies, which often stifle legitimate businesses and destabilise financial sectors and institutions. Finally, money laundering undermines democratic institutions and threatens good governance by promoting public corruption through kickbacks, bribery, illegal campaign contributions, the collection of referral fees and the misappropriation of corporate taxes and licence fees.

We, the parliamentarians who are responsible for protecting the values of the Council of Europe, should take all necessary steps to protect and strengthen these democratic institutions against the threat of money laundering. We should keep in mind that money laundering is a global problem. Instead of singling out a few countries for their bad records, we should address the issue at a global level.

Mr AVETISYAN (*Armenia*) – Today we are discussing the most pressing issue, which threatens the very foundations of our democracies. I thank rapporteur Mr van de Ven for his honest and scrupulous work, by which complex money-laundering schemes and the real outreach of organised crime have been exposed. At the same time, I want us to thank those brave investigative journalists who, often at the cost of their life, unfortunately, have uncovered those schemes which routinely penetrate and subvert democratic societies. Victoria Marinova, Jan Kuciak, Daphne Caruana Galizia and many others were direct victims of organised crime and state negligence.

Corruption per se is not a new phenomenon. What is new about it is that with the development of transnational networks and the only true grey zones, meaning offshores, the speed at which corruption in one country can affect the overall ecosystem is tremendous. While money certainly cannot buy you love, it buys influence. The stolen assets and money are turned in no time into offshore companies, with limited responsibility – it is better to say none – and the ability to buy political friends, silence truth and distort integrity. Unfortunately, even the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was not free of this influence. The infamous caviar diplomacy penetrated these very walls to blindfold the international community to the existence of political prisoners, virtual state capture, entrenched authoritarianism and a crackdown on civil society. However, I also commend our efforts to expose and reject this poisonous influence, and our strength to stand for our integrity as stated in our Resolution 2185 (2017).

It takes many to set up a money-laundering scheme, yet often it takes one to defeat the chain. An independent, persistent investigation, with careful reading of declarations, often surmounts this challenge. I stand in support of the rapporteur's call for the national authorities to follow up on the IBAC report, where enough evidence is compiled, to prosecute the corrupt politicians in their respective countries. The battle against corruption should start in the member countries, otherwise we risk fighting consequences instead of addressing the root causes. Of course, the fact that in some countries this corruption is the very cement of an authoritarian edifice makes matters worse, yet continuous attention and monitoring are necessary. Hence, concurrent with our work with the member States, we should strengthen the intra-European mechanisms for disclosing money-laundering schemes and fighting organised crime. In addition to Moneyval and GRECO, our work should be more strategically linked with the efforts of our international partners. Furthermore, civil society and the independent network of journalists are invaluable allies in this struggle.

Ms GORGHUIU (*Romania*) – I believe that this debate on money laundering is much needed, since in our capacity we must take a firm stance against any illegal practices that put into question not only our fundamental principles but our social and economic development. We have to show zero tolerance for corruption, organised crime and money laundering. To achieve this goal, in our capacity as legislative policy makers we have to identify together, as soon as possible, the legal loopholes that make possible such large-scale money-laundering schemes.

Romania strives to fulfil all the international and European standards for combating money laundering. I am well aware that my country is still lagging behind in the transposition of the latest European Union anti-money-laundering directives, as dozens of other European Union member States have done so. The main reason for that lies in the delayed legislative process in our Chamber of Deputies, where some diverging opinions on issues relating to the NGOs' legal status prevented us concluding the parliamentary proceedings on time. The political majority wanted to impose its will at any cost, a point of view which contradicted the provisions of the European Union directive. The political majority tried to impose exorbitant fines on NGOs, along with other inappropriate measures designed to hinder their current activities. The Senate adopted a new text, which will be on the agenda for the plenary soon.

Investigative journalists and NGOs have played a vital role in bringing to light these very serious financial and economic offences. The crucial contribution of whistle-blowers in disclosing these illegal practices also has to be praised. Those involved in the diverse investigative media are sometimes in a very risky business, since they put their lives and those of their families at risk while they do their jobs. To combat money laundering, there is a need for an independent and powerful judiciary at national level because this is the only way that such crimes can be properly investigated and the perpetrators brought to justice. Many shortcomings related to anti-money-laundering procedures have been identified at national levels; they have to be consistently addressed by improving the legal framework in this field.

The European Union's fourth and fifth anti-money-laundering directives have to be transposed by European Union member States into international law. At the same time, there is a need for more coherence among European countries in dealing with anti-money-laundering activity by involving all stakeholders in the field. I fully support the proposals contained in the draft resolution and draft recommendation, and I invite all the members of the Assembly to vote for this text.

Mr LACROIX (*Belgium*) – Thank you, Mr van de Ven. A Frenchman who once died for a cause said that courage consists in seeking out truth and speaking truth. Today, through this report, you are speaking truth because you are persistent and stubborn. You have worked together with the services and staff of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe to speak out in the name of democracy, the rule of law and public authority.

A number of elements stand out in your report and a number of colleagues have touched upon them. First, we do not less need state but more. We need a better state when it comes to this cause of the fight

against money laundering. I will also touch upon tax fraud and tax evasion in my conclusion. Your report shows that in spite of the existence of national institutions, which after all are doing their work with the difficulties that we are aware of, we need a greater degree of co-operation at European and international level. Through this report, you are definitely the champion of multilateralism. Some see the Council of Europe and the European Union as the problem. But when it comes to tax evasion, the fight against corruption and money laundering, they are the solution, through harmonisation and enhancing the fight against this scourge, along with tax fraud, avoidance and evasion. We need to work together with the European Central Bank when it comes to harmonising efforts to fight money laundering. People talk about \$80 billion that just disappeared but we often know where the money ends up. We are talking about trillions in tax avoidance or evasion.

All countries are trying to make savings and cuts and they impose so many things on their citizens. Let us try to get our hands on these trillions, which could then be injected into infrastructure, sustainable mobility, environmental issues and democratic concerns. This week we have attempted to address the budgetary problems of the Council of Europe resulting from the shortfall of the Russian contribution. If we had a fund fuelled by a percentage levied on the fight against tax fraud and money laundering, we would resolve the problem.

Mr GHILETCHI (*Republic of Moldova*) – I, too, thank Mr Mart van de Ven for presenting this report, especially given that lately authorities around the European Union have been deeply concerned about the extent of money laundering involving various member States.

The Republic of Moldova has felt first-hand the negative consequences of being used in an international money laundering scheme. Over \$20 billion was laundered in an operation that came to be known simply as “the Russian Laundromat”. It was made possible by the structural deficiencies of the Moldovan banking system, which facilitated and offered favourable conditions for this type of fraud. The operation represented a significant blow for the entire financial system of the country, and negatively affected the image of the Republic of Moldova abroad.

Following the scandal, Moldovan authorities initiated several investigations that targeted judges who played an important part in the scheme. Beyond the ongoing investigations, the prosecution has already obtained convictions of several people who were directly involved or who benefited from the fraud. Their names are mentioned in the report. I have to admit that this is not an easy process and that significant challenges arise throughout all steps of the investigation.

I am glad to note that the draft resolution itself recognises the encouraging developments that have happened in the Republic of Moldova. I point out the most relevant ones: the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova adopted a new legal package in the financial and banking sector, which transposed European Union directives; and the government amended the law of the National Bank of Moldova, to increase its supervisory power and allow better monitoring of commercial banks. Those developments lead to tangible results. Investors with strong reputations and experience acquired stocks in Moldovan banks, such as Banca Transilvania at Victoriabank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development at Moldova Agroindbank and Intesa Sanpaolo at Eximbank. Thus, in contrast to the situation several years ago, most of the banking system is controlled by banks or foreign financial groups. This is a very positive sign.

The rapporteur is critical of the fiscal amnesty introduced in July 2018. During the implementation of the law, the government listened to concerns expressed by civil society and international organisations and strengthened the requirements, by increasing from 3% to 6% the tax paid on capital and by excluding all – I emphasise, all – public officials and politically exposed people who are under investigation in the banking fraud. The draft resolution asks the Republic of Moldova to consider repealing the amnesty law, but I want to tell this forum that the window to declare capital ended on 15 February 2019.

On the golden visa, which is similar to the fiscal amnesty, I should say that if anti-money laundering mechanisms and principles are well applied, it represents an opportunity to attract additional capital and investment into the economy. To reduce the risks, the government instituted a strict control mechanism. So far, only one person has obtained citizenship in this way, so the process seems to offer the required amount of due diligence.

Mr MELKUMYAN (*Armenia*)\* – Our rapporteur has given an excellent presentation. Today, as always, money laundering should not be seen as an ordinary crime: it is the equivalent of common looting. It is stealing money from your country – the place where you live and grew up. The consequences involve more than the amount of money laundered. That money is often spent on illegal arms and ammunition, drugs and developing and growing the traffickers’ systems. All the laundering involves the banking system and offshore jurisdictions.

The recent discovery of the Panama papers illustrates that perfectly. We need immediate and drastic action, with adequate laws and initiatives to be taken by the governments of the countries involved.

An economic revolution is under way in Armenia. There are several definitions of “economic revolution” in the treasuries of the world, but one thing is clear: we must make sure that we make radical changes to our economic relations, to make them qualitatively different from what went before, based on the law. We must change the lives of producers and consumers by changing their behaviour. Most important is that change and also a change of mindset. Our political party, Prosperous Armenia, has already presented its approach to this economic revolution through the statements of our leader, Gagik Tsarukyan.

The main thrust is to provide guarantees for investors – assurances that they can invest in full safety through the adoption of appropriate laws – not only providing full protection but immediate imputation as well. Investors should not have to ask for protection from senior officials; their protection should be the law. Among the Commonwealth of Independent States countries and Eurasian Economic Union countries, only Armenia has declared that it is ready for the implementation of this economic resolution. God willing, it will become reality. Several countries are following us to study our experience, and time will tell.

You have to show an investor clearly, and in an understandable way, that your country – in our case, landlocked Armenia with no railway links to the wider world and a small domestic market – has the will and determination to guarantee better laws and a better climate for investment than the neighbouring countries. From a professional point of view, the fact that several well-known international companies have now entered our market is eloquent proof. That, of course, is just one solution among many potential ones.

Mr HUSEYNOV (*Azerbaijan*) – When an essentially necessary struggle focuses not on the major issues but on the directions selected for specific purposes, the question of why that is immediately arises. In considering that “why”, it turns out that there are impure intentions behind a seemingly benevolent initiative.

Corruption, organised crime and money laundering are like a worm that infests a public tree and eats it from the inside. Unfortunately, this disease has spread on a huge scale in the past half century. Reporting on such a multifaceted problem that is so sensitive at each interface can only be done with proper awareness. However, in the first paragraph of the report, something appears that seems to work against the ultimate intention. Although the phrase “global laundromat”, with common characteristics, is appropriate, given that the phenomenon has embraced the whole world, attention is directed to a specific state – my country.

Of course, I would not want something that embraced the world like a contagious disease and virus to be present in Azerbaijan. Nonetheless, we are all in the same boat and the wave of this epidemic has somehow also affected us. But what gives rise to concern and objection these days? Deflecting attention from the major sources of these troubles and expressing a specific opinion about Azerbaijan demonstrates that the report itself arose as a result of a certain order and is part of a certain scenario. If an order is biased, it is a form of corruption itself.

So why Azerbaijan? What are the implicit aspirations of focusing on this country? We have been feeling this here in the Council of Europe for the past 19 years. When Azerbaijan first came to the Council of Europe in 2001 as a real member of the so-called “democracy school” one of its main goals was to put an end to the occupation policies pursued by another member State against our country. But in the first steps, we witnessed that some forces, some lobbies, and some centres have a significant impact on this Organisation. Every time we begin to raise the issue of Armenian occupation against Azerbaijan, some contrived topic is put forward against Azerbaijan. The goal is to miss the main target and focus on this raised issue, and to make Azerbaijan protect itself from any attack, instead of talking about Armenian occupation.

Unfortunately, this report appears also to be a re-running of this method that we already know. Certainly, such biased and orderly attempts which are based on unclean interests cannot but cause resentment. Please, do not disrespect the issues and the necessity of analysing and investigating important topics. The truth is that this report which refers to money laundering needs to be cleaned of its own impurities.

Mr SEYIDOV (*Azerbaijan*) – This report addresses an important topic and we must express our gratitude to the rapporteur on two counts. First, I thank him for touching on such an important problem which unfortunately touches all countries all over the world including the member States: the fight against money laundering and crime and illegal economic activity. This is of course very important. Secondly, I thank the rapporteur because this report gives me well documented information but in a way that could be used for political purposes, which undermines the report.

I am holding up an iPhone, a very well-designed gadget available across the world. It is designed in California and made in China and used all over the world. We are discussing a laundromat mechanism designed in Europe; it is made in Estonia and used by people in different countries. We should think not only about the countries to be found in the list by the rapporteur, but about the real causes of the problem. Only then will we be objective and only then will we be able to fight this disease, as my colleagues and friends have said.

There is a fear in this Organisation. You are scared to mention big countries, as my friends have already mentioned. You are scared to investigate the situation in a more understandable and visible way within European Union countries, and in order to present this important report you have fingered and accused former Soviet Union member States of the Council of Europe. This is not fair. Also, even if you are going to do that you should not insult and give nicknames to the people of these countries. You can stress the problematic issues, and you can say that nobody is perfect, including my country, but never, never again finger and accuse the nation, the people.

That is why at the end of these discussions we will present some amendments. Unfortunately, they were rejected in the committee, but I ask those who are thinking about nations in this Chamber to support the amendments in order to prevent insulting certain nations and in order to touch on the problem itself.

Mr XUCLÀ (*Spain*)\* – I warmly congratulate Mr van de Ven on this important report. It would have been nice to have been able to discuss it on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday when there would have been a better turnout and more attention paid in this Chamber. This makes me think of the report from Mr Marty of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe a few years ago on mafia groups which had a major impact on public life and led to an in-depth consideration of a very common reality.

I don't agree with Mr Seyidov that only a few countries are mentioned in the report; there are some very clear recommendations on specific nations: the Russian Federation, the Republic of Moldova, Azerbaijan, the United Kingdom – the distinguished representatives of the United Kingdom have talked about their own problems – and Denmark, although I am not sure if a Danish representative is present as there is a pre-electoral period there. There are recommendations for all the member States. We have heard from representatives from Estonia, the Netherlands, the Republic of Moldova and Azerbaijan, and reference has been made to the major problem in the report: oversight and how to regulate financial transactions around the world.

It is particularly important to stress the veracity of each and every reference in this report, which with the explanatory memorandum and recommendations takes up 25 pages. On 22 April last year a report was published at the conclusion to an investigation by this Assembly, and the 25 pages of proven facts by the rapporteur in today's report should be contrasted with over 200 pages of speculation and denunciations in the report of last year. There has been an explicit reference by Mr van de Ven to that extraordinary investigation and that 230-page report.

The key is the courts; there is a specific case being taken up in the Milan court and some courts have closed cases and, if there are no criminal charges, that can be because there are political aspects. The rigour of Mr van de Ven's report should be contrasted with the speculative nature of other reports.

Ms GAFAROVA (*Azerbaijan*) – This report addresses allegations in various money-laundering cases. However, only in one case concerning Azerbaijan does the report refer to the nationality of the people allegedly involved in the misdeeds. It is well known that misdeeds and crimes do not have nationalities. In the Council of Europe we should refrain from attaching any nationality labels to any allegations or accusations of wrongdoing. The Assembly should not bind itself to labelling decided by others. Such an attitude may amount to a denigration of an entire nation for the alleged misdeeds of a few individuals.

The report implies that Azerbaijan is a laundromat and unfortunately our calls for the rapporteur to drop the reference to Azerbaijan before the term "laundromat" went unheeded. If the report follows the logic of attaching nationalities to such things, we could label the Global Laundromat the Russian Laundromat, and the Troika Laundromat the Armenia Laundromat.

Some colleagues might think that I, as an Azerbaijani MP, am using my imagination and bias to bring Armenia into the latter case. Before colleagues reach such a hasty conclusion, I invite them to look at the revelations from the Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project about a month ago. The illegal Troika money laundering scheme was perpetrated by an Armenian businessman, Ruben Vardanyan, and numerous Armenian nationals were involved in it. For instance, according to that NGO, a central person in many Troika

Laundromat transactions was Armen Ustyan. His signature could be found in numerous contracts connected with the scheme, along with those of other Armenians.

From 2006 to early 2013, the Troika group enabled the flow of US \$4.6 billion into the system and directed the flow of \$4.8 billion out. The dozens of companies in the system generated \$8.8 billion of internal transactions to obscure the origin of the cash. The key figure in this huge money laundering case is Ruben Vardanyan. Until the details of the case were revealed, Ruben Vardanyan was acclaimed for his generous philanthropic activities, but this philanthropist turns out to be an ordinary crook who has made his wealth out of laundering criminal assets. The Assembly should know that Ruben Vardanyan, who also owns a bank in Armenia alongside other businesses there, has been one of the main funders of all kinds of Armenian diaspora organisations. The Assembly should seriously investigate whether Ruben Vardanyan's illegal funds ended up in this Organisation. I wonder whether those who have pressed for more investigations targeting one specific country will also ask to investigate this serious case.

To conclude, I call on our rapporteur once again to drop the nationality adjective from before the unproved allegations of involvement in criminal acts, because it does not represent the truth. I ask him to answer my only question: why do we use nationality only in one case and not in others?

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Ms Gafarova. That concludes the list of speakers.

I call the rapporteur, Mr van de Ven, to reply. You have three and a half minutes, which is the remainder of the total of 13 minutes.

Mr van de VEN (*Netherlands*) – I thank colleagues for their thorough comments on my report. When I started the report, the sum of money involved was only €24 billion, but now it is up to €350 billion, so it has become even more important to deal with money laundering. The comments that colleagues have made prove that they took notice of this long and thorough report. I thank the staff of the Council of Europe who supported me for one and a half years to bring you this report.

The report is not about one bank or one country; it is about a global issue, as members have said. We have learned that overseas territories – faraway countries with palm trees – are also involved in such schemes, and the money brought into those countries is passive money that does not benefit the people. I am grateful for all my colleagues' comments. Even as we speak, there are new developments. An addendum to the report was accepted this week, and then there was an addendum to the addendum to reflect the latest developments involving Swedbank. I have just been informed that there is an inquiry going on in Slovenia. We are not just talking about passive activity in all these countries; investments have been made following the last year's IBAC report on alleged corruption in our Parliamentary Assembly.

The reference in paragraph 4 of my report gives a false impression. I am not aware of any details, but – we have also noted this in the addendum to the report – in Germany a fine of €20 000 has been issued to Karin Strenz in view of corruption, and Transparency International has initiated criminal prosecutions in Germany. I am happy about those developments, and we are only starting off. Corruption is a cancer in our society, and we must cut it out. An egg cannot be partly rotten; if an egg is rotten, it is always completely rotten, so we must do something. Unfortunately, I am not in a position to have an amendment to an amendment to an amendment in the addendums concerning Slovenia; that is not possible at this stage, but there will certainly be developments.

We heard that the references to the Azerbaijani Laundromat were not pleasing, and I was asked to answer a question about that. The point is that the Azerbaijani Laundromat is a technical term used in the IBAC report, by other organisations and in the press, and it is a concept about which there are a lot of facts and information. I thank all my colleagues, and once again I thank the staff of the Council of Europe for supporting me in this very important project.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Mr van de Ven.

Does the chairwoman of the committee wish to speak? You have three minutes.

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Organised crime, corruption and money laundering are an increasingly deadly poison running through the veins of public life. If they continue to spread, they will sicken our democracies and eventually kill them. Those crimes steal public money, subvert the rule of law and destabilise democratic institutions. They destroy public confidence in democracy and open the door to populism and extremism. The fight against organised crime, corruption and money laundering is thus core business for this Assembly, at the centre of the home of democracy.

Along with the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, I warmly welcome Mr van de Ven's report, which sheds light on three huge money laundering schemes of recent years. I encourage you to read it carefully, especially its recent addendum. Some of the facts are eye-opening. Money laundering is not just about sneaking money from one bank account to another; it is about breaking laws at many levels. Money laundering is a multi-layered and multi-faceted phenomenon, with different elements in different countries. A grand scheme such as the Laundromat exploits weaknesses in multiple jurisdictions, and it is almost impossible for a single country to combat a large-scale international scheme, so international co-operation is essential. Each link in the chain – each country implicated in the scheme – must ensure that common international standards are fully and effectively applied. That is what is proposed in our committee's draft resolution, and I strongly encourage you all to support it.

The PRESIDENT – Thank you, Ms Ævarsdóttir. The debate is closed.

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights has presented a draft resolution, to which 17 amendments have been tabled, and a draft recommendation, to which no amendments have been tabled. The amendments will be taken in the order in which they appear in the compendium. I remind members that speeches on amendments are limited to 30 seconds.

I understand that the Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights wishes to propose to the Assembly that Amendments 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 12 and 17 to the draft resolution, which were unanimously approved by the committee, should be declared as agreed by the Assembly. Is that so, Ms Ævarsdóttir?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Yes.

The PRESIDENT – Are there any objections? That is not the case.

*Amendments 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 12 and 17 are adopted.*

We come to Amendment 1. I call Mr Seyidov to support the amendment.

Mr SEYIDOV (*Azerbaijan*) – The rapporteur says that “Azerbaijani Laundromat” is a technical term. It is one thing for it to be used once as technical terminology, as it is in paragraph 1, but when it is used frequently throughout the whole text, it insults the people of the country. Instead of “Azerbaijani Laundromat”, we should use the words “money laundering from Azerbaijan”, which mean exactly the same but without fingering the nation. I ask you to support the amendment not for me, but for your own nations. Today they are insulting me; tomorrow it will be you.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Mr Schwabe.

Mr SCHWABE (*Germany*) – Mr Huseynov said that not everything bad comes from Azerbaijan. That is for sure, even on the question of corruption, but a lot of bad things in the history of this Organisation have come from Azerbaijan, and we in this Organisation have had to suffer them and debate them for a long time. We have to mention Azerbaijan, for sure. I am strongly against the amendment.

The PRESIDENT – What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Rejected by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.

*Amendment 1 is rejected.*

We come to Amendment 4. I call Mr Seyidov to support the amendment.

Mr SEYIDOV (*Azerbaijan*) – I know that you are tired, dear friends, but I say to the committee and even to Mr Schwabe that I will present this amendment again and again – not because of me or because of this Assembly, but because of the nation. If we cannot use exact wordings, it undermines the report. If we are serious about the report and about fighting crime, we should be very fair. That is why the report should say “money laundering from Azerbaijan”, not “Azerbaijani Laundromat”.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Mr Schwabe.

Mr SCHWABE (*Germany*) – To make it very clear, it is not against the nation or against the people of Azerbaijan; it is against the government, which is accused of doing very bad things to undermine the credibility of this Organisation. We should be very clear, even in our reports, in what we mention. Again, I am against the amendment.

The PRESIDENT – What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Rejected by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.

*Amendment 4 is rejected.*

We come to Amendment 2. If it is agreed to, Amendment 3 will fall. I call Mr Seyidov to support Amendment 2.

Mr SEYIDOV (*Azerbaijan*) – If we say “Azerbaijani Laundromat”, we should also say “Russian Laundromat”, “Estonian Laundromat”, “German Laundromat” and “Armenian Laundromat”. Why do we mention only Azerbaijan when money laundering happens in the United Kingdom, Germany, Estonia and other countries? For one reason only: to finger and accuse our nation. I ask you to think about that. We are not playing a game; we are fighting for values that we share.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Mr Schwabe.

Mr SCHWABE (*Germany*) – In the end, it is the same. I know who has to do which job here, and maybe somebody has to defend their own country like this, but I think they should be a little bit ashamed. Somebody who organised one of the biggest crises for this Organisation in its 70 years of existence should be a little more self-critical and accept that we have to mention what has to be mentioned. For sure, I am against this amendment as well.

The PRESIDENT – What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Rejected by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.

*Amendment 2 is rejected.*

We come to Amendment 3. I call Mr Seyidov to support the amendment.

Mr SEYIDOV (*Azerbaijan*) – Ladies and gentlemen, I am conscientiously doing this job. Once, approximately 70 years ago, another country created a lot of problems in Europe, but now we are sitting together. Nobody has the right to finger this nation – nobody. That is why it is the same story with others. Unless we can understand that the question is not about Azerbaijan, but about the Council of Europe, it will be much more difficult in future. That is why – despite all your resistance, Mr Schwabe – I will fight for this again and again, not because of the government but because of my nation. This is not fair.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Mr Schwabe.

Mr SCHWABE (*Germany*) – Just to make it clear so that there is no misunderstanding, there is corruption everywhere in the world. As for whether we should call it German, or whatever: there is corruption in Germany as well, for sure, and we speak about a lot of problems in this Organisation, but we have to say things as they are. The crisis of this Organisation was the result of a laundromat organised by Azerbaijan. That is clear; there is a report of more than 200 pages, which you can read – somebody mentioned it. I think we need more investigations about it in future, but for now, we are making this report and we have to mention what we have to mention. For that reason, I am against the amendment.

The PRESIDENT – What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Rejected by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.



*Amendment 3 is rejected.*

We come to Amendment 9. I call Mr van de Ven to support the amendment on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

Mr VAN DE VEN (*Netherlands*) – The amendment concerns supervisory authorities in relation to AML supervision of multinational financial institutions.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Mr Cilevičs.

Mr CILEVIČS (*Latvia*) – The major problems relate not to the Baltic banks, but to the Baltic branches of the Nordic banks. It is not fair to blame only the AML systems in the Baltic States, without even mentioning the States in which the banks are located, so I am against the amendment.

The PRESIDENT – What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Approved by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.

*Amendment 9 is adopted.*

I call Mr Cilevičs to support Amendment 13.

Mr CILEVIČS (*Latvia*) – The rapporteur mentioned the insufficient co-ordination and clarity about the division of competence and labour between national authorities and European supervisory authorities – in particular, the European Central Bank and the European Banking Authority. That should be mentioned in the resolution, as the co-ordination and division of competence must be improved.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Rejected by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.

*Amendment 13 is rejected.*

I call Mr Cilevičs to support Amendment 14.

Mr CILEVIČS (*Latvia*) – This amendment is along the same lines. Co-ordination between international and European authorities should also be substantially improved. The rapporteur writes about that a lot, but it should be mentioned in the resolution. In practice, banks are in a difficult situation; sometimes they are sanctioned for working with entities that are not on European blacklists but are, for example, on American blacklists. That should be avoided.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Mr VAN DE VEN (*Netherlands*) – The point is that the Baltic States have to make national rules. It is not only about international rules; national rules should supervise anti-money laundering regulations.

The PRESIDENT – What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Rejected by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.

*Amendment 14 is rejected.*

I call Mr van de Ven to support Amendment 11 on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

Mr VAN DE VEN (*Netherlands*) – This is about responsibility. There has to be national responsibility for anti-money laundering rules. It means, in essence, that countries cannot shift the blame to international rules; their own national rules should be applied first.

The PRESIDENT – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*) – Approved by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT – The vote is open.

*Amendment 11 is adopted.*

We will now proceed to vote on the draft resolution in the report titled “Laundromats: responding to new challenges in the international fight against organised crime, corruption and money laundering”, contained in Document 14847, as amended.

The vote is open.

*The draft resolution in Document 14847, as amended, is adopted, with 57 votes for, 9 against and 5 abstentions.*

We will now proceed to vote on the draft recommendation contained in Document 14847, to which no amendments have been tabled. A two-thirds majority is required, counting only affirmative and negative votes.

The vote is open.

*The draft recommendation in Document 14847 is adopted, with 59 votes for, 7 against and 4 abstentions.*

*(Ms Schneider-Schneiter, Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair in place of Mr Nick.)*

### **3. The situation of migrants and refugees on the Greek islands: more needs to be done**

The PRESIDENT\* – The next item of business this afternoon is the debate on the report titled “The situation of migrants and refugees on the Greek islands: more needs to be done”, Document 14837, presented by Ms Petra De Sutter on behalf of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.

I remind colleagues that the Assembly decided on Monday morning to limit the time given for speakers in the debate to three minutes. I call the rapporteur, Ms De Sutter. You have 13 minutes in total, which you may divide between presentation of the report and reply to the debate, as you deem fit.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – In July last year, I visited a reception and identification centre at Moria, Lesbos, in the context of this report. “Reception and identification centre” is the official, formal term, but the term “hotspot” is more commonly used and sadly better reflects the reality of the centres. Sadly, the Greek hotspots do indeed honour their name, first and foremost because they are overcrowded. Whereas originally the five hotspot centres should have housed 7 500 people, their capacity was reduced to 5 000 by the end of 2017, when in fact they were occupied by more than double the amount of people. As the advocacy manager of Doctors Without Borders confirmed to us during our December 2017 committee meeting in Paris, the overcrowded situation at Moria led to violence, riots, different types of exploitation, abuse and even rape. Female refugees and minors have to be locked in their rooms at night for protection. Besides sexual violence and sexual exploitation, other forms of organised crime have been reported in the camps.

On top of the safety and security issues, the living conditions for the refugees at the Greek hotspots are not humane, as I witnessed with my own eyes. Their housing lacks any actual form of housing: for many months, refugees have to sleep in simple tents, exposed to rain, wind and cold temperatures. Sanitary provisions are completely inadequate: there are far too few toilets and bathrooms for all the residents in the camp. Food distribution is insufficient: queues for food are long, and waiting times amount to hours. Health services are lacking: in camp Moria there was one doctor for thousands of refugees, meaning refugees were put on a waiting list for several months. That is the situation I saw last July. Notwithstanding the presence and efforts of non-governmental organisations, which are often under great pressure and operate with limited

resources, this humanitarian crisis is happening on the European continent. It is unacceptable. The Mayor of Lesbos even compared Moria to a concentration camp “where all human dignity is denied”.

Many children, minors and unaccompanied minors are impacted by the refugee crisis. This is of particular concern, because in order to appoint a legal guardian for unaccompanied minors, the Greek law turned to the regional prosecutor, in theory, or to NGOs, in practice, rather than to individuals. In the past, such action has been shown to be problematic. Moreover, Greece has failed to grant family reunification rights to all refugees, and especially to persons under subsidiary protection.

The living conditions for refugees on the Greek islands are so poor that they lead even to death. On 8 January this year, a refugee from Cameroon died in Moria because people have to sleep in tents in the winter, even with temperatures far below freezing. We know of deaths in previous years. The conditions on the islands are reason enough for the resolution to express great concern about the situation of asylum seekers in the reception and identification centres.

The situation on the Greek islands of Lesbos, Samos and Chios requires our utmost concern, but centres of the same kind also exist at the Greek land border with Turkey, where the number of asylum seekers nearly doubled in 2018, to more than 10 000. Last weekend, at that very border, refugees revolted, as well as at the border with North Macedonia. The revolts serve as a warning call, with respect to both the problematic European Union-Turkey deal and the problematic collaboration between the member States of the European Union.

A new relocation programme is needed at the European Union level to take pressure off countries of first arrival, such as Greece. Other member States should consider admitting asylum seekers or refugees who wish to leave Greece. Moreover, Greek members of parliament hold the European Union-Turkey deal responsible for the current humanitarian crisis, especially in the so-called hotspots.

On the island, refugees are literally trapped in prisons surrounded by water. Only vulnerable refugees are allowed to leave, and that often means only ill migrants who are transferred to the Greek mainland for medical treatment. Sadly, their being transferred to the mainland seems to slow down their asylum process, and out of despair many of them do not return to the horrible camps, becoming undocumented migrants in mainland Greece and trying to move on to other countries. As I just mentioned, that remains impossible as long as no real and new relocation program is put in place by the European Union.

The European Union-Turkey deal seems to be problematic from many perspectives. The Assembly has already expressed its concerns about the living conditions and rights of refugees living in Turkey, thus questioning the deal itself. Readmission agreements should be in place only with so-called safe countries. It should be noted that the number of migrants reaching Greek soil increased when there were political problems with the bilateral Greek-Turkish relations. In June last year, Turkey completely and unilaterally denounced, for publicly declared political reasons, its readmission agreement with Greece.

The number of migrants stranded on the Greek islands seems to be increasing again. Only in January this year, there were more than 2 000 people. During December last year, there were more than 3 000. We should keep in mind that those figures include only the migrants who survived the dangerous journey, and we should realise that they often paid a lot of money to smugglers. Faced with persistently high and even rising numbers of migrants, Greece needs the support of the member States of the Council of Europe and of the European Union.

The resolution calls on the Greek authorities to improve immediately the housing, sanitary and security situation inside the overcrowded centres, especially those on the islands of Lesbos, Samos and Chios. In that respect, NGOs should in all circumstances be granted access to the camps. It also calls on the Greek authorities to ensure immediately that women and unaccompanied minors are better protected. In that respect, effective guardianship and family contact or reunification should be ensured for minors.

In future, the Greek authorities should duly identify and register all migrants arriving by boat on the Greek islands and transfer asylum applicants who are registered and identified to open accommodation centres on the Greek mainland. Uncontrolled transfers must be stopped. The Greek authorities should also set up specific law-enforcement units to deal with organised crime and trafficking and smuggling. Such units could also be used to combat what has in the past looked like the misappropriation of public funds earmarked for assisting refugees.

The resolution also calls on the Turkish authorities to identify and register all migrants and refugees entering Turkey and share such data; to increase efforts to combat human traffickers and smugglers; and to

honour readmission agreements while at the same time honouring migrants' rights to decent living standards, so that Turkey can rightfully be classified as a so-called safe country.

Last but not least, the resolution calls on the European Union to assist Turkey in honouring its readmission agreement, while at the same time introducing a new relocation programme to take pressure off countries of first arrival and the thousands of asylum seekers who are stuck there; to monitor the effective use of European Union funds, while also introducing programmes to finance the humanitarian projects operated by NGOs; and to assist Greece in managing the external borders of the European Union, establishing better asylum procedures on the Greek islands, better accommodating asylum seekers and refugees, implementing family reunification in accordance with the respective directive, concluding readmission agreements with other safe countries of origin, and preventing the push-back of migrants.

Finally, we recommend that the Committee of Ministers should invite both Greece and Turkey to continue the readmission of rejected asylum applicants and irregular migrants, and to address all types of crime, as well as assessing the fight against drug trafficking, human trafficking, sexual exploitation and the misappropriation of public funds for refugees.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that we can make a bold statement here today, because a genuine humanitarian crisis has been happening, and still is happening, on the European continent, a crisis that I have witnessed with my own eyes. We cannot and should not ever accept the presence of camps that are being compared by the mayors of the areas in which they are located to concentration camps, where all human dignity is denied. We should recall – ourselves and all of our peoples – that humans have rights, the very rights that we are protecting and defending in this institution. Humans have rights and refugees, besides being refugees, are also human.

I thank you all and once more I thank the secretariat staff, without whom this report would not have been as accurate as it is.

The PRESIDENT\* – Thank you, Madam Rapporteur. You still have three and a half minutes to reply at the end of the debate.

We come now to the speakers on behalf of political groups. I call first Mr Fridetz. You have three minutes.

Mr FRIDEZ (*Switzerland, Spokesperson for the Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group*)\* – After the huge influx of refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Africa in 2015 – refugees who crossed the seas, including the Mediterranean, often risking their lives – we have too often felt that the problem has calmed down. Every now and again there is a reference to the “boat people”, which is actually a daily problem in the Mediterranean. It is as if Europe has got used to what is unacceptable and migration is far less often in the headlines than it was.

Yet the excellent report of our colleague, Petra De Sutter, not only takes stock of the situation – quite candidly – and the essential measures that are urgently required, but shows how obvious it is that there is a continuing tragedy, particularly on the Greek islands. Thousands and thousands of refugees have come to seek protection and hope on European soil. Months, sometimes years, pass and they continue to live, or rather subsist, in the land of their hopes, which has essentially been turned into a prison for them. These men, women and children are innocent victims of political and economic circumstances that are beyond their control.

The situation on the Greek islands remains troubling and the local authorities are struggling to deal with the multiple challenges they face: over-populated camps; poor access; problematic hygiene and living conditions; interminable waiting times for everything, including food; endemic violence; and abuse, including sexual abuse, with unacceptable threats, particularly against large numbers of women and unaccompanied minors. Greece is doing a great deal and I do not intend to cast aspersions against that country or its authorities. It is a country that geography has placed on the migrant route today.

What our colleague's report stresses is that this is not just a problem for Greece in isolation. All our countries are concerned, and we must do more to provide financial assistance to Greece and all the countries that are on the frontline, as well as fostering relocation programmes, which are an essential factor. If our countries do not open their doors and welcome a larger number of refugees, then situations such as those in the Greek islands will not be solved. More generally, it is crucial for Europe to take greater interest in stabilising the surrounding world, promoting peace, co-operation and development first and foremost.

The indescribable tragedies experienced by these people are only being partially resolved today and they may only be the tip of the iceberg; tomorrow, migration may increase because of other conflicts. Above

all, however, the demographic trends elsewhere in the world and climate change will make matters even worse. We cannot keep kicking the can down the road; we must do much better, and much more, and much more quickly. It is a challenge for all our countries in the name of humanism and fraternity, which we call for. Madam De Sutter is right – we need to step up our efforts.

Mr EVANS (*United Kingdom, spokesperson for the European Conservatives Group*) – I thank the rapporteur for her excellent report. It must have been quite stressful to visit the camps and see the appalling conditions in which thousands of people – innocent people – are living.

I will take up the message of Pierre-Alain Fridez from Switzerland: unless we get to the root causes of these problems, they will simply continue and indeed get worse. That seems to be the situation on the particular Greek islands that we are talking about, specifically Lesbos, on which Moria is located. We are looking at the conditions in which these people are living. There are tent villages, with thousands of tents – way more than could be reasonably accommodated on Lesbos. That is leading to lots of health problems, including hunger or even starvation, because of the inadequate level of food provision. Then organised crime adds to the existing woes of the people living there.

It is not as if billions of pounds are not going in to try and help to alleviate the problems there. One of the calls by the rapporteur is to ensure that the money being provided is effectively spent. Dealing with that problem has got to be a priority and I hope that the European Union will take that issue incredibly seriously, to ensure that the money that is aimed at the most vulnerable people in society actually goes to help them and is not siphoned off anywhere else.

One of the report's recommendations is that unaccompanied children should be reunited with their families wherever those children happen to be. My only question mark about that – this is a question that we can ask ourselves – is this: are we therefore running the risk of more young and unaccompanied children being put on boats to make the perilous crossing to Europe? These people are desperate – we know that – but we must make sure that we do not introduce any policies that will lead to an increased number of these children risking death by making this perilous journey, and indeed an increased number of unaccompanied children who then run the risk of being exploited, including for slave labour and sexual abuse. There is also the risk of mental torture. I visited some refugees once at Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. I talked to some of the youngsters there. Some of them had seen awful things; some of them had experienced awful conditions. Such children need psychiatric help; we really need to focus on that.

In asking the question again – “What do we do to stop unaccompanied youngsters from being put on to boats and making this perilous journey?” – all I need to do is to remind people of Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old Syrian boy who died on 2 September 2015. His body was washed up in Bodrum, in Turkey. Anybody who wants to see the consequences of this crisis should just look at that photograph and reflect on it. Then, hopefully, that will encourage each of us, as Members of Parliament, to go back to our own countries and to raise these issues, in order that our governments take this crisis seriously.

Mr VAN DE VEN (*Netherlands, Spokesperson for the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe*) – For more than a decade, the Greek islands have been a main entry point for migrants to the European Union. A few migrants cross the Turkish-Greek land border, while the vast majority of migrants come by boat from the nearby shores of Turkey. There are currently around 20 000 people living in reception centres, often in unheated tents and containers, with limited access to running water and electricity, insufficient food supplies, as well as a lack of health services and poor security. They are exposed to violence, harassment and exploitation, without proper security or protection. This situation needs our immediate attention.

The islands are heavily overburdened and under-resourced, leading to a deplorable humanitarian situation for the migrants. The mayor of Lesbos stated that the camp at Moria resembled “concentration camps, where all human dignity was denied”. Riots, violence, different types of abuse and even rape have frequently occurred in such an overcrowded situation. Female refugees and minors were locked into their rooms at night for protection. We should be particularly alarmed by reports of sexual violence and human trafficking by camp gangs and smugglers, and other forms of organised crime. We must salute the work of the various NGOs present on the Greek islands. Under great pressure and with limited resources, they have offered a variety of services including legal advice, medical care and material support in the form of food and shelters. We should salute the Greek Government for the decision to transfer 2 000 asylum seekers from Lesbos to the mainland, but it must not simply transfer migrants from one humanitarian crisis to another.

What should be done? Medical services should be improved rapidly. Unaccompanied minors and women in particular should be protected against violence, sexual exploitation and human trafficking. Greek authorities should improve the housing, sanitary and security situation inside the overcrowded reception and

identification centres of Lesbos, Samos and Chios. They should transfer registered and identified asylum applicants to open accommodation centres operated by the International Organization for Migration, alternative camps operated by humanitarian non-governmental organisations and apartments rented by the UNHCR on Greek islands and mainland Greece. Uncontrolled transfers into the streets of Greek cities or third countries must be stopped. Asylum procedures must be accelerated, and applicants housed and supported in accordance with international legislation and humanitarian standards. Misappropriations of European Union funds used for the camps should be investigated rapidly. Vulnerable migrants should be protected more effectively, in particular unaccompanied minors, single women and people with medical needs. The requirement of a serious medical condition for transfer to mainland Greece should be reviewed.

Ms CHRISTODOULOPOULOU (*Greece, Spokesperson for the Group of the Unified European Left*)\* – I congratulate our rapporteur Ms De Sutter on the work that has gone into this report and on her presentation. I wish to clarify certain issues. We should agree that Greece extended a warm welcome to the enormous influx of migrants in 2015. One grandmother on Lesbos was put forward for the Nobel peace prize, and the Pope thanked her personally. What has happened since then? Why are the living conditions of the migrants so bad? We need to look at the reasons and work out why the situation is so extreme.

Greece is a very poor country. Until August 2018, Greece's economy was ruled by the memorandum of understanding. Today, many European Union countries refuse to share the responsibility for migrants with Greece. It is true that there are fewer migrants now than in 2015, but we still have a large number for such a small country. Italy and Malta have both closed their ports and borders and refuse to let in any migrants. Greece is the only Mediterranean country to accept them. Many European Union countries refuse to consider requests for family reunion. We need to face the fact that the Greek islands are legally part of Europe, and Greece is a member of the European Union, so this is not a uniquely Greek problem but a European problem. Migrants and asylum seekers are on the islands sitting and waiting for a response to their family reunion requests, but they never arrive. People are pouring into the country but they cannot leave, because there is no way forward. The Greeks are doing as much as they can to support the increasing needs of the people they have taken in, but they are simply unable to host such a large number of migrants. That means that people are stuck in Greece as in a prison.

People say that Greece has better facilities to host migrants and it simply does not want to. But Greece is limited; the European Commission monitors what Greece does with the money it is given to host the refugees. If loans are being given out, they go first and foremost to NGOs. Moreover, the islands in question have many problems of their own. The inhabitants are no longer able to live off tourism, in what was their former normal life. It is important that we recognise how courageously they have tackled the problem. Greece has made sure that it has followed the Geneva Conventions. We are not the only country to take in migrants.

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland, Spokesperson for the Group of the European People's Party*) – On behalf of the EPP I congratulate Ms De Sutter on her important report. For many years, immigrants from the Middle East and Africa have reached European countries, some looking for greener pastures, others as typical refugees from countries affected by armed conflict and some looking for family reunion. In the first 10 months of 2015, more than 600 000 arrived in Europe through Greece. The short land border between Turkey and Greece is fairly well guarded, so immigrants came to Greece through the narrow straits separating the Greek islands, mainly Lesbos and Kos, and also Chios and Samos, from the west coast of Turkey. For many thousands of people fleeing conflicts and poverty from the Middle East and Africa, the islands located near the shores of Turkey have become the first stage of their journey to Europe.

The EPP is confident that the Greek Government has made tremendous efforts to handle all the hardships that migrants and refugees are undergoing on those islands. It is important to note that Greece makes continuous efforts to further improve reception conditions and to accelerate asylum procedures. On the other hand, the Greek islands crowded with migrants and refugees should be smoothly and quickly relieved from the heavy burden they face. As such, it could be recommended that Greek authorities consider a quicker movement of people from the islands to the mainland. Millions of United Nations dollars granted to Greece are just a drop in the ocean of needs. Apart from resolving the root causes mentioned by Mr Fridez and Mr Evans, more financial assistance should be mobilised. The agreement signed in March 2016 by the European Union and Turkey has brought a significant reduction to the uncontrolled inflow of newcomers. However, as the report states, since March 2016, the humanitarian and human rights situation in the so-called hotspots on the Greek islands has not improved.

The Assembly welcomes the action of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to provide rented housing facilities to asylum seekers on the mainland and the Greek islands. The role of the IOM in renovating and operating open accommodation centres in mainland Greece should be highly appreciated.

Finally, we recommend monitoring to ensure the effective and transparent use of European Union funds, and that a common system of allocation be developed, so that the burden on Greece and other frontline member States can be lifted effectively.

The PRESIDENT\* – Thank you, Mr Munyama. Ms De Sutter, do you wish to respond now to the group spokespersons? You have four minutes.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – No.

The PRESIDENT\* – We move on to the general debate. Ms Kyriakides is not here, so I call Baroness Massey.

Baroness MASSEY (*United Kingdom*) – I thank the rapporteur for this report, and for keeping the issue of migrants and refugees on the Greek islands on the agenda. Her report maintains that more needs to be done, and her personal reflections, particularly on the physical and mental suffering taking place, were powerful. We have previously discussed the inadequate planning and implementation of a workable programme on migrants to the European Union, and the need for a co-ordinated European approach, as Ms Christodoulou said.

The report points out that there are still enormous problems. For me, there are four key issues. The first is registering and identifying all persons arriving through the Turkish-Greek land and sea border; the second is the failure to facilitate family reunification, and the situation of unaccompanied minors, including the lack of effective guardianship; the third is the living conditions in reception and identification centres; and the fourth is the lack of protection from sexual exploitation and human trafficking for unaccompanied minors and women.

I mention enormous problems; these are reflected in many reports from many organisations. For example, an Oxfam report of January this year about vulnerable and abandoned children states powerfully that “people are being put at risk by flawed processes and chronic understaffing in European Union ‘hotspot’ camps on the Greek islands. They...are being abandoned in overcrowded camps in squalid conditions.” Oxfam criticises “convoluted and ever-changing rules and procedures”, shortages of staff that result in failure to identify and assist the most vulnerable, and unaccompanied children being wrongly registered as adults and placed in detention centres.

A law briefing paper from Oxford reminds us that between 2016 and 2017, the immigration detention population increased by 73%. It maps the work of, and challenges facing, civil society organisations in Greece, which are working hard with detainees, and it speaks of the problems associated with restriction of movement and the detention of unaccompanied children for prolonged periods.

Ms De Sutter’s comprehensive report sets out important conclusions, including about the need to accelerate the asylum process, and the need for performance assessments of camps for migrants in Greece that are funded by the European Union. We need hard, consistent evidence, so that we can see accurately what is going wrong and how to improve matters. Amnesty maintains that the deal between the European Union and Turkey on a containment policy imposes unjustified and unnecessary suffering on asylum seekers, while unduly limiting their rights. I again congratulate the rapporteur on her very powerful report.

The PRESIDENT\* – Thank you, Baroness Massey. Mr Stellini is not here, so I call Lord Balfe.

Lord BALFE (*United Kingdom*) – Let me add my thanks to those already given to the rapporteur for an excellent report on a very difficult situation. We have to give credit to both Greece and Turkey, which have been left with a really difficult job by the rest of Europe. It is worth remembering why this situation came about; it was not by accident. It came about because we decided that we would build democracy in Afghanistan; that we needed to change the government of Iraq, and then stripped civil society there of all its institutions; and that we needed to bomb Syria because we did not like Bashar al-Assad, who somehow seems to have survived. That is not to mention Libya, which is of course at the other end of the Mediterranean, and is also totally wrecked by policies of not Greece or Turkey, but countries far to the north that are refusing to accept responsibility for the chaos and suffering that they have caused.

You cannot blame refugees for trying to escape from the terror and horror of where they are to a better life. The question is: what do we do? The one thing we certainly should not do is blame them. Chancellor Merkel thought that she had a solution: she opened the borders of Germany, very courageously, but she rapidly found that there was no limit to the numbers that she would have to face.

One of the lessons to have come out of this is that Operation Sophia has failed; I was on the House of Lords Committee on that operation. We have comprehensively failed to deal with the refugee crisis. We have created a new business racket in the Mediterranean that basically encourages migration, including illegal migration. My suggestion – this is only a partial solution – is that, among other things, we rebuild the communities that we have destroyed. We have to put millions – indeed, billions – of pounds of aid into rebuilding Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, and help them to again become prosperous countries that people wish to live in. That, plus all the remedies outlined in the rapporteur's excellent report, is a recipe for the future, and the way forward, as I see it. Do not pretend that those of us in the richer West, and particularly in countries such as Britain, can escape without blame.

Mr GRAAS (*Luxembourg*)\* – I congratulate Petra De Sutter on the report. Reading it, we quickly realise what inhumane conditions many migrants face when they arrive on various Greek islands. The report also forces us in Europe to take a critical look at our policies on migrants and refugees. The situation in places such as the Greek islands – but not just there – is certainly untenable, but we should not stigmatise those countries, because migrants have their first glimmer of hope when they step foot on those territories.

Three years after Turkey and the European Union signed their agreement, the situation has improved; however, there are many outstanding problems, as the report points out. Ms De Sutter talks about the need for urgent concerted action, involving all European States. That is indeed needed, but unfortunately the political will of the European Union is often lacking. Let us take the example of Operation Sophia, launched in June 2015, which tackles the smugglers of migrants off the coast of Libya. Now that Italy and other European Union member States have rejected any kind of mechanism for redistributing refugees, Germany has announced that it will withdraw its naval support. The European Council, however, has suggested extending the operation, with the same tasks, until 30 September this year. The commander of the operation was temporarily instructed to suspend naval deployment during the extension, so we are talking about a partial failure of the operation. What is the point of having a naval operation if you have no ships?

At the end of 2017, the European Commission appealed for 50 000 vulnerable people to be resettled over two years. That appeal was almost ignored by many European countries. We need to set up a stable system that shares out responsibility fairly between the member States of the European Union – a system based on the principles of solidarity and responsibility. If we want better management of the welcoming and settling of migrants, we need more officers in place in Italy, Cyprus and Greece to support the actions of the European Asylum Support Office. We also need more officials to help out with the operations of the so-called Frontex institution or agency. We of course welcome the decision taken to increase the number of staff working for Frontex by 10,000 by the year 2027.

Colleagues, we know that efforts have been deployed at European level. I refer you, for instance, to the new system for exchanging information on security and borders. Having said that, a lot remains to be done if we want to ensure that we overcome the current deficiencies of the system. In particular, we need to look at Dublin III and at Eurodac. We also need to ensure that we address the deplorable conditions that prevail right now for asylum seekers.

Mr VARVITSIOTIS (*Greece*) – As a Greek parliamentarian, I listened to Ms De Sutter describing the situation. I have to say that I was a rapporteur three years ago when we discussed the situation in the Greek islands. I said then that the situation had slightly improved, because it had, but everyone criticised me at the time. Two years later, what can we see? None of the recommendations drafted by the Council for the Greek Government has been implemented or brought into force. The situation has got far worse and Greece has been given €1.6 billion to cope with this crisis. This money has not been able to help improve the situation. The issue of migration will continue to be a problem. We are not going to bring a stop to it and we need to draft rules to cope with the situation. These rules will need to be clearly defined. We can define the rules applying to migrants and then those applying to refugees. There are people who arrive without any documents; they need to go back to another country. But in fact, this has not been properly examined in Greece. In other words, someone who arrived in Greece today or yesterday, let us say, will be waiting for an answer to their application until 2021 while living in very difficult conditions.

I will also mention what has been happening at the European Commission level because it has signed an agreement on this with the Greek Government. This agreement is highly debatable and can be much criticised. It is related to keeping VAT at a very low level in hotspots if the reception centres are full and if conditions are becoming parlous. so that refugees can no longer be properly accommodated. I am talking about the companies which are not to blame for the situation on the islands but are being forced to keep people in these very poor conditions. Yet products are less expensive and more available. The position adopted by the European Commission is untenable and goes against the values of the European Union. Ms De Sutter



mentioned this as a very negative aspect. I conclude by pointing out that we really need to take action, not only in the Council of Europe but in the context of Greece as well.

Mr ESSL (*Austria*) – We discussing a very serious subject. The refugees in the Greek islands need to be accommodated in a better fashion but I am not sure whether the measures suggested here are really the answer and whether they will achieve what we seek. Of course, we need to avoid these unhygienic, squalid conditions in which people are living; those conditions are not worthy of humans. But the objectives of many people who are in these situations are not necessarily one and the same. There are indeed many refugees who have fled from terror or political persecution, and who feel that their lives are threatened, but there are also many refugees with completely different objectives. They are simply looking for a better life. That is why this approach is not so straightforward when it says that there should be resettlement programmes, because some refugees also have specific aims.

In the last few years, Austria has taken in more than 100 000 refugees on a long-term basis and resettled them in proper conditions. The situation occurred at one stage that we were almost overwhelmed and it was proposed that a few hundred refugees should be transferred to neighbouring countries, particularly to Bratislava – within a member State of the European Union. It was a safe State, but that did not work because the refugees themselves clearly had the objective of either staying in Austria, or going to Germany or Sweden. As we all know, within the European Union there is freedom of movement, so you cannot just send them to the Czech Republic or Lithuania to fulfil a quota which has been slapped on. They have to accept that, and I point out that this might not necessarily work.

That is why I say that we have to have the courage to face the truth and recognise that there are refugees who come here and are not subject to persecution, or who do not have their lives or health threatened. We must say to them that, if there is a negative decision on their asylum application, they have to go back to their home country. You have to say that to them right from the start, or beforehand. If we did, far fewer applicants would come and these centres would not overflow quite so much as they do now. There are a lot of other things that we can do, such as helping in the countries of origin and closing down the smuggling routes while fighting the smugglers. That would really help the people who need it.

MS KAVVADIA (*Greece*) – First, I thank Ms De Sutter for her work in preparing the report and for her commitment to the ideals of the protection of human rights, which we share. Having said that, I must observe as head of the Greek delegation that in its original form, at least, this report on a very sensitive and important matter was flawed. There were strong objections to many points included in the draft resolution. With systematic efforts, some of these major issues have already been largely corrected in the form of the text presented to the Plenary, with the introduction of amendments that we proposed. For this co-operation, I must thank the rapporteur.

However, many more points in the draft resolution still need to be amended, corrected and updated. It is a matter of truth and justice, but also of great political symbolism, for this Assembly to note always that any delay or problem concerning the enjoyment of the rights of asylum seekers, as recognised by Greek and international law, is primarily due to the fact that the reception and protection mechanisms in Greece remain under enormous pressure, despite the efforts of the Hellenic Republic. This is the result of sudden and, in some cases, unpredictable spikes in migratory and refugee flows which have the effect of overburdening the capacity of the state mechanism to absorb additional flows, in particular by transferring as many vulnerable people as possible to the mainland.

The European Court of Human Rights acknowledged in its judgment *J.R. and others v Greece* the serious difficulties faced by Greece in receiving thousands of migrants and refugees. The court noted that the mass influx of migrants and refugees is a particularly difficult matter for the national authorities, especially when it occurs on a relatively small island. Greece's efforts, especially under the current government and parliamentary majority, are in line with its obligation under international and European law, as well as with the European Convention on Human Rights.

While we always acknowledge that there are still challenges and serious problems and that there will always be challenges and serious problems as long as there is a migration and refugee issue – possibly for years or even decades – we must stress that significant progress has been made, as a result of continued efforts by the Greek side.

We have said it so many times in this Chamber and it needs to be said and heard once more: the migration and refugee issue is not a problem, much less a problem of Greece or just the countries of first reception. It is a European litmus test, and one which Europe has failed. Greece will continue to strengthen our efforts to ameliorate the situation. We demand, however, that more of our European partners do the same.

I have one last thing to say, about what Mr Varvitsiotis just said. I am deeply sorry that he decided to speak as a member of the opposition, with the upcoming elections in his mind and without mentioning the real picture.

Ms VERDIER-JOUCLAS (*France*) – I congratulate the rapporteur Petra De Sutter on her report. Its recommendations are clear, precise and important given the situation described, to which we must respond collectively and in solidarity. The humanitarian situation on the Greek islands, as well as the living conditions experienced by thousands of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants is a matter for concern.

Greece knows that it is not alone as it faces the need to host migrants; several European Union countries are providing support, although we regret that not all European Union countries take part. With that in mind, I would like to work on the progress achieved by the Greek authorities on the asylum procedures. I am delighted that my country, France, has co-operated with the Greek authorities and the European Asylum Support Office; support has also been provided by the French agency OFPRA, which protects refugees and stateless people. That can be renewed.

I want to put two questions to the rapporteur. Given the logistical problems with the camps' reception capacities, what national and community resources are available for Greece to modernise current camps? How is the use of those resources being monitored?

I have a further question. In your recommendations you describe the situation of women and children as a great cause for concern. You recommend the affording of special protection to women and children from violence. Of course, we very much welcome that recommendation. However, what is intended and what judicial measures can be taken against abusers?

Like you, rapporteur, I am very aware of the humanitarian situation when it comes to migrants and the points of entry in the different countries. We are often talking about people who are fleeing violence in the difficult situations that their countries are undergoing. It is therefore worthwhile for our Assembly to consider these questions. I am confident that the work carried out at the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons will be successful.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – I thank the rapporteur for the report. The refugee issue is a collective issue and not a collective problem. We have to adopt collective solutions rather than national approaches. We need to maintain our collective values and principles. The blame game against Greece has to stop. Greece is implementing for asylum seekers and migrants international and European law. Let me give family reunification as an example. That programme, which is even provided for in the Dublin Regulation, is blocked or restricted by many member States.

The Greek authorities are hosting and accommodating in hotels and new camps refugees and asylum seekers. There are problems, but still more than 30,000 vulnerable people have transferred from the islands to the mainland since 2018. We have voted for a law on the acceleration of asylum claims and procedures, which has already produced results. We have also voted through a new law on the guardianship of unaccompanied minors.

In Greece, we have now passed from hosting on to integration. More than 12,000 refugee children are now going to school. Believe me, we fight a lot against right-wing and far-right mayors in making it clear that that can happen. Furthermore, there is full access to the health services in hospitals for everyone – migrants, refugees, Roma: everyone. All of them also have labour rights, based on public programmes, and full access to sport activities and culture without the need for other documents. Is there more to be done? Yes, as we know very well – we struggle every day. But I am proud of my country and my people for all we have done until now in the context of a devastating economic crisis. I wish that other member States were doing half what we are doing, rather than maintaining humiliating ignorance and inhuman policies on the refugee issue. They are far from the basic principles of international law and the civilisation that humanity reached after the Second World War. In that context, the report, even if it has positive aspects, does not reflect that spirit.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – I thank the rapporteur for her hard work in preparing this significant report, but I want to draw your attention to the unfortunate claim in the report that Turkish authorities are responsible for the situation on the Greek islands. Allow me to share some general information about the issue.

The number of irregular migrants on the Greek islands was about 853,000 in 2015. That has decreased significantly due to the efforts of Turkey in the framework of the agreement of 18 March 2016. In 2016, 2017 and 2018, the number of irregular migrants who had crossed to the Greek islands was about 173,000, 30,000

and 30,000 respectively. When the 18 March agreement was put into effect in 2016, the total number of irregular migrants crossing the Greek islands was about 92,000.

While a sharp decrease in the number of irregular crossings from Turkey to Greece has been achieved in the same period, the number of irregular migrants arriving in Turkey has greatly increased. In the first 10 months of 2018, about 247,000 irregular migrants were caught in Turkey, reflecting a 65% increase compared with the previous year. These figures clearly demonstrate that there is an increasing migratory pressure on Turkey. Let me remind you that the number of irregular migrants crossing to Greece in 2018 was about 30,000. When compared with the first 10 months of 2017, there was only a 12% increase in the number of irregular crossings.

The majority of irregular migrants are from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq. Although there are 3.6 million Syrians in Turkey, the number of Syrians who arrived at the islands was about 12,000 in 2017; as a result of the measures taken, the figure was only 7,398 in 2018.

Let me remind you of the big picture we are all facing. According to UNHCR statistics, as of 2017 the migrant population in Greece is around 83,000. In the United Kingdom, it is 162,000; in Belgium, 68,000; in Austria, 172,000; and in Sweden, 328,000. In Turkey, however, the migrant population is about 4 million.

As those numbers show, Turkey fulfils its obligations arising from the 18 March agreement. Given the efforts of Turkey to stem irregular migration and the fact that it bears that whole burden, to put the blame on Turkey for the situation on the Greek islands is unacceptable. I invite everybody to be fair. Turkey is doing all it can, and we are proud of our country. Thank you for your attention.

Mr KYRITSIS (*Greece*)\* – Between 2011 and 2018, about 5.3 million migrants and refugees arrived in Europe. At the height of the crisis, in 2015, they came to the Greek islands from the Turkish coast, and the pictures of those people then going on foot to try to reach Germany struck the whole world. We had not seen such a situation since the end of the Second World War.

The extreme right used the same old strategy, however, attacking people, attacking foreigners. They always come out with policies to stoke fear. They say that austerity is caused by the other, by foreigners, and this is very difficult to combat.

Refugees constitute only about 1% of the European population; they are not a threat in any shape or form. Despite the efforts of the media and despite all the good intentions behind the report, there is a political context: everything is stacked against the migrants. There are a lot of things we should be able to do to improve the situation of the migrants on the Greek islands.

We must appreciate that there is the agreement between Turkey and the European Union and there are some very poor, small islands with few inhabitants who have suddenly been overwhelmed by so many people. Greece is insisting it should stick to international law, which is right, and to humanitarian law on people applying for asylum.

Today's debate could be a time for a much wider rethink about the whole of Europe and how Europe has changed 70 years after the end of the war. We see the rise again of fascism and the far right rearing its ugly head again.

The PRESIDENT\* – Thank you.

That concludes the list of speakers.

I call Ms de Sutter, rapporteur, to reply. You have three and a half minutes.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I have been listening carefully to all of you, dear colleagues, and we will of course discuss the amendments, when many of the issues raised will return.

I took up this report because we heard testimonials of mental health problems, depression and suicides in the camp of Moria. When I was in Moria, I talked to doctors who said they were burned out because they could not handle the work; there is so much suffering there that is not dealt with. I talked to an imam, a volunteer who was just there to give Muslim refugees who had died and whose bodies were found on the beaches a decent Muslim burial. Going to that burial place was one of the most touching visits I have ever made. I talked to a 14-year-old Syrian boy who told me how he got there; it was a terrible story. I also talked to a 75-year-old

Afghan who had been there for one year. He did not really understand why he was there; his application had not gone anywhere. These were the stories that motivated me to take up this report.

I can only come to one conclusion: we as politicians fail if in this House of human rights we think we should start to defend human rights and then start quarrelling, saying that we all do our best and it is always somebody else's fault. I understand very well that the Greek and Turkish authorities are not very happy with this report because I am critical, but that is because we as European countries should be self-critical; we cannot say that this is a terrible situation but we cannot do anything about it and it is always the fault of somebody else. We are collectively at fault and guilty for the humanitarian situation in places such as Moria. If you do not believe me, please go and see for yourself.

I have tremendous respect for the volunteers I talked to: doctors from all over the world who go there, and musicians who give music classes to refugees for nothing in terrible circumstances. I have seen dentists there, and ophthalmologists who come in their free time to give spectacles to refugees who lost their glasses when making their boat crossing. I have seen tremendous suffering there, and a lot of altruistic people who want to help others.

This report tries to give recommendations to wake us up as politicians so we take up our responsibilities. We are all collectively responsible for the human suffering I have seen in places such as Moria. I have tried to compromise on a lot of the amendments. I hope there will be some common sense in the Assembly and that we vote for this report. Thank you very much.

The PRESIDENT\* – Thank you.

I give the floor to the vice-chair of the committee.

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – It is the committee's view that this report has been prepared very thoroughly and comes from hearing several witnesses and experts in our committee as well as the fact-finding visit to Greece of our rapporteur, Dr de Sutter. As a medical doctor she was able to evaluate the shortcomings in healthcare and psychological care in the camp on Lesbos and the two camps she visited on mainland Greece.

The report is very fact-based and clearly describes the terrible situation of refugees and migrants in Greece. Because of these disturbing facts, the findings of the report are sad and shocking at the same time. About 800 000 persons entered Greece from Turkey at the peak of the crossings in 2015. Migrant boats crossing from the nearby Turkish coast have been a constant phenomenon for more than a decade.

Our authorities have had much time to improve things, therefore. The European Union provided Greece with a large amount of funds to establish reception and identification centres. However, the centre at Moria on Lesbos was compared to a concentration camp by the mayor of Lesbos. The uncontrolled sewerage situation should demand its immediate closure under Greek legal standards. Witnesses informed the committee about sexual exploitation, violence against women and children, the absence of heating in winter, very long queues at the very few toilets and food distribution points, and the absence of doctors and security staff, as well as drug trafficking inside camp Moria. These facts speak for themselves and call on us to be clear in our reaction as this Assembly of national parliamentarians.

Other camps are run by NGOs on Lesbos with more success, but NGOs have little access to European Union funds, which are given directly to the Greek central authorities. However, the European Union is investigating cases of the misuse of funds allocated through the Greek authorities.

Where does this leave us? I call on all colleagues to fully support this report, which addresses human suffering which should not happen in Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This report is not about abstract political concepts or party-political debates. It is about pointing up unacceptable human suffering. As the report's title indicates, "More needs to be done."

The PRESIDENT\* – The debate is now closed.

The Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons has presented a draft resolution to which 34 amendments have been tabled. The committee has also presented a draft recommendation to which 3 amendments have been tabled. They will be taken in the order in which they appear in the Compendium. I remind you that speeches on amendments are limited to 30 seconds.

I understand that the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons wishes to propose to the Assembly that Amendments 3 (and 20, which was identical to 3), 4 (and 22, which

was identical to 4), 5 (and 23, which was identical to 5), 25, 37, 7 and 18 to the draft resolution, which were unanimously approved by the committee, should be declared as agreed by the Assembly.

The Committee also unanimously agreed Amendment 19. However, because this amendment has consequences for other amendments or is subject to proposals for sub-amendment, it must be considered separately.

Is that so, Mr Munyama?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – It is.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone object? That is not the case.

*Amendments 3, 20, 4, 22, 5, 23, 25, 37, 7 and 18 are adopted.*

We come to Amendment 17, which has a sub-amendment. I call Mr Brandt to support the amendment. You have 30 seconds.

Mr Brandt is not in the Chamber. Would anyone like to move Amendment 17? If no one wishes to move this amendment, it will fall. The same applies to sub-amendment 1, which was related to Amendment 17.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*)\* – I would like to move the amendment, if I may. I suggested the sub-amendment to improve the amendment. Can I do that?

The PRESIDENT\* – Yes, you can.

We now come to the sub-amendment, tabled by Ms De Sutter. I call her to support the sub-amendment.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – With my sub-amendment, I propose not to replace paragraph 1, as the amendment states, but to add the text as a separate paragraph and to make some slight changes to it. I think the problem is not the hotspot concept in itself, but the implementation of it. I also wanted to delete the repetition of the statement about not meeting the requirements for the improvement of the situation on the islands. I think the amendment would be improved by making the text a separate paragraph in that way.

The PRESIDENT\* – Thank you, Ms De Sutter. You have defended both Amendment 17 and the sub-amendment.

Does anyone wish to speak against the sub-amendment? That is not the case.

We know your view, as the rapporteur, because you have just moved the sub-amendment. You are in favour. The committee is in favour.

I shall now put the sub-amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

*The sub-amendment is adopted.*

Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment, as amended? That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is in favour.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 17, as amended, is adopted.*

The PRESIDENT\* – As Amendment 17 was amended, it is possible to adopt Amendment 19 if members want to do so.

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 19.

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Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We tabled this amendment to acknowledge the progress made and the continuous efforts of the Greek authorities and Greek people to ameliorate the situation. There is still more to be done, but the phrasing is more concrete.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is in favour.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 19 is adopted.*

I call Ms Günay to support Amendment 9.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – It should be noted that the increase is due not only to the irregular migrant arrivals from Turkey, but also to the arrivals from countries such as Lebanon. In addition, the victimisation of asylum seekers in Greece and the overcrowding in reception and identification centres stem from Greece's inefficient attitude to assessing asylum applications. Our country has no effect on this phenomenon, and it is believed that the asylum procedures should be regulated.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Ms De Sutter.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – We do not agree with the amendment, because this is not in any way an accusation against Turkey; it is just a fact that most of the boats arriving in the Greek islands come from the Turkish coast. Even if boats come from Lebanon or elsewhere, that is a fact. I do not think that we should accept the amendment

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 9 is rejected.*

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 21.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We have tabled this amendment to show the progress, as I noted before, on the housing scheme and apartments, hotels and accommodation, and on health issues. We want to focus on problems that still exist, so we restrict this provision in our amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Ms De Sutter.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I am against this amendment. We tried to compromise, but we did not succeed.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 21 is rejected.*

I call Ms Günay to support Amendment 10.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – Law enforcement officers in our country are working hard to combat migrant smuggling and human trafficking. The smugglers caught in our country have been through the necessary judicial procedures and have been evaluated with precision. Therefore, there is no impunity for smugglers in Turkey.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Ms De Sutter.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I fully acknowledge what Ms Günay said, but for me this is not a reason not to collaborate. We call upon the Greek authorities to co-operate with Interpol, Europol and the Turkish authorities. I do not see any reason to delete that, so I am not in favour of this amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 10 is rejected.*

Amendments 5 and 23 having been unanimously adopted, we come to Amendment 11. I call Ms Günay to support the amendment.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – While there has been a sharp decrease in migrants crossing from Turkey to Greece, the number of irregular migrants coming to Turkey has greatly increased. In the first 10 months of 2018, more than 245 000 irregular migrants were detected in Turkey – a 65% increase from the previous year. Those figures clearly demonstrate that there is increasing migratory pressure on Turkey, so the negative impression of Turkey given in paragraph 4 is not fair. If the Parliamentary Assembly wants self-criticism, please let us have it from all countries.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Ms De Sutter.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – Again, I do not really understand the amendment, because we ask for more solidarity and for both Greece and Turkey to deal with this problem. It is a fact that people take boats from Turkey to Greece, so I do not accept the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 11 is rejected.*

We come to Amendment 24. I call Mr Psychogios to support the amendment.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – The European Commission periodically publishes all the relevant data on the sums, the responsible entities to whom the funds were allocated and the titles of the action. The funding allocated is under strict scrutiny from the relevant services. The services of the European Union have made no official reports of any misappropriation of funds by the Greek authorities. I stress that the OLAF investigation is directed at non-governmental entities, not at public authorities, so the sentence in the report is completely unsubstantiated.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Ms De Sutter.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – We really would like to keep that sentence, because the misappropriation of European Union funds has been documented, is under investigation and is an important matter that is raised in several places in the report. I would like the Assembly to reject the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 24 is rejected.*

Amendments 25 and 37 having been unanimously adopted, we come to Amendment 26. I call Mr Psychogios to support the amendment.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We tabled the amendment because the family reunification programmes – in any case and for people of any age, whether or not they are under subsidiary protection – are blocked or restricted by the majority of member States of the European Union. We want to place that in the report, so that they have to take full responsibility for what they are doing.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? I call Ms De Sutter.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – We tried to compromise on this, but we did not succeed. The report is on Greece, so we would like to keep it on Greece, not point fingers at other member States. It is not the case that because Greece is misbehaving in certain ways, we have to say, “Yes, but everybody else is doing the same thing.” We do not accept the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 26 is rejected.*

We come to Amendment 27. I call Mr Psychogios to support the amendment.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We tabled the amendment to update the content of the paragraph by highlighting the new legislation on guardianship and minors, which constitutes a very important step towards addressing the problem of the crucial situation of unaccompanied minors in Greece.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – In favour, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 27 is adopted.*

We come to Amendment 28. I call Mr Psychogios to support the amendment.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – In the committee, there was a compromise on the amendment that is not written in the final text. We intended to delete the paragraph, but afterwards we came to the conclusion that we could meet the rapporteur in the middle by agreeing to add a reference to the responsibility of European Union member States after the word “overpopulated”. I would like the rapporteur to take a position on that, so maybe we can do that now, orally.

The PRESIDENT\* – Thank you, Mr Psychogios, but a sub-amendment cannot be tabled to an amendment that just makes a deletion. However, we can accept an oral amendment, to be taken after the vote on Amendment 28.

Amendment 28 proposes deleting the whole of paragraph 8. Either we delete it or we keep it; if we decide to keep it, we could consider an oral sub-amendment, provided that members do not object, but we cannot make a sub-amendment to a text that has been deleted.

Before we vote on Amendment 28, does anyone wish to speak against it? I call Ms De Sutter.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – We were trying to find a way to keep the facts, but maybe delete the interpretation in the second sentence; that could have been a compromise. If we have to proceed as you propose, procedurally, I advise the Assembly not to accept the amendment, because if paragraph 8 is gone, it is gone, whereas if it stays, we can supplement it.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, if there is no compromise.



The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 28 is rejected.*

The rapporteur would like to move an oral amendment as follows: in paragraph 8, delete the second sentence. I consider that the oral amendment is admissible, provided that there are no objections. If anyone thinks that it should not be considered, please indicate that by standing. Ten full members or substitutes would have to object to the oral amendment. That is not the case.

I call Ms De Sutter to support the oral amendment.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – Paragraph 8 was brought in after discussion with the committee. It has been contested, but if we took it out, we would lose the facts. Under this compromise, which I guess is acceptable to all parties, the facts will be kept in the report but people’s interpretation will be left up to them.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – In favour.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*The oral amendment is adopted.*

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 29.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We withdraw the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone else wish to support the amendment? That is not the case.

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 30.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – Transfers from the Aegean Islands take place in an organised manner, by a joint task force led by the Ministry of Migration Policy, with the participation of the UNHCR and IOM. People are being transferred to State-monitored facilities on the mainland. There are no “uncontrolled transfers” to third countries; that does not correspond to the reality.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – This is the position of the Greek authorities; I fully understand that, but if you talk to people and NGOs, you will see that the reality may be somewhat different. I want to keep those words in the paragraph, so I reject the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 30 is rejected.*

I call Ms Günay to support Amendment 12.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – Our country accepts irregular migrants delivered by the Greek authorities from the Aegean Islands within the scope of the 18 March agreement. However, the agreement does not cover the Greek mainland.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – First, this paragraph is on the vulnerability issue, so the amendment is out of scope. Secondly, there is the European Union-Turkey 18 March 2016 agreement, but there is also the bilateral Greece-Turkey agreement, which would allow that. For that reason, I am not sure that it would be legally correct to accept the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 12 is rejected.*

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 31.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We withdraw the amendment because there are such references in other parts of the report.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone else wish to support the amendment?

That is not the case.

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 32.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We tabled this amendment to point out that NGOs can co-operate with the Greek authorities and register with the ministry. Even if there have been some problems, these days all stakeholders – non-governmental organisations, political groups and others – have access to the camps.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – Again, this is about the NGOs. We understand the term “provide full access” in the amendment, but the request that all NGOs should be registered allows them to be denied access on the basis of registration. In order to allow NGOs full access, we do not accept that phrasing.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 32 is rejected.*

I call Ms Günay to support Amendment 13.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – The Turkey-Greece bilateral readmission protocol is part of a security agreement between Turkey and Greece. The protocol may be applied by us if the Greek side fulfils its obligations to combat terrorism between our countries. However, it is known that Greece grants asylum to members of FETÖ, the Fethullah Gülen terrorist organisation, which threatens the security of Turkey. When land crossings to Greece from Turkey were examined closely, it was understood that the majority of those people are related to FETÖ. It has to be taken into account that, despite the lack of a readmission agreement with Bulgaria, no increase has been witnessed in land crossings to Bulgaria due to Bulgaria’s attitude towards FETÖ members. That comparison explains Turkey’s concerns about this matter.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I understand Turkey’s concerns, but this paragraph relates to the Turkish authorities, and the amendment says, “Well, maybe the Greeks should do more.” I do not like that. Furthermore, the association of refugees entering Greece with terrorism is, for me, not acceptable. The report is not about that issue.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 13 is rejected.*

I call Ms Günay to support Amendment 14.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – Pursuant to international agreements such as the 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 protocol, we cannot share information about asylum seekers with third parties without their consent. Since our country is not a member of the European Union, we are not part of the Schengen Visa Information System.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – We are convinced that registration is extremely important to protect these refugees. It can be done on a voluntary basis, to share data in whatever form with the Schengen Visa Information System, so we do not accept the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – Against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 14 is rejected.*

I understand that Amendment 33 was withdrawn in committee. Is that correct?

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – Yes, because it is connected to Amendment 6.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone else wish to support the amendment?

Ms de CARLO (*Italy*) – We support the amendment because we think it is important to share the burden of the frontline States.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – The amendment was withdrawn because it is exactly the same as Amendment 6, but in another part of the resolution. We felt that paragraph 9.3.9 would be a better place than paragraph 9.3.1. We are not debating the content of the amendment; we fully agree with that. It was a duplicate amendment and in two different places, which is not acceptable.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The amendment was withdrawn.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 33 is rejected.*

We come to Amendment 34, to which a sub-amendment has been tabled by the committee. I call Mr Psychogios to support the amendment.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We reached a compromise in the committee. We agree with the sub-amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – I call Ms De Sutter to support the sub-amendment.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I wanted to keep NGOs in the amendment, so we put together NGOs with “other relevant stakeholders, including public authorities”. That includes everyone and names NGOs explicitly. That was the compromise we found.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the sub-amendment? That is not the case.

Mr Psychogios has indicated that he will support the sub-amendment. The committee is of course in favour.

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I shall now put the sub-amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

*The sub-amendment is adopted.*

Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment, as amended? That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – In favour.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 34, as amended, is adopted.*

I call Ms Günay to support Amendment 15.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – The protocol between Turkey and Greece was made in accordance with article 8 of the agreement on combating crime, especially terrorism, organised crime, illicit drug trafficking and illegal immigration. We will apply the bilateral agreement if the Greek side fulfils its obligations to combat terrorism, pursuant the aforementioned agreement. Paragraph 9.3.4 is not appropriate as the Greek side has not fulfilled its obligations.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – It is the same argument. We ask Turkey to do something and it says, “Well, not before Greece does something else.” The second argument is on the link with terrorism in the report. For those two reasons, I do not accept the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 15 is rejected.*

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 35.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – We want to declare that Greece is fully dedicated to implementing the law of the sea. There are no push-backs in the Aegean Sea. We are proud of that, as against the other countries that do push-backs. As this is a collective responsibility and a collective issue, we want to include other member States, not just Greece.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – Again, the arguments are the same. To replace “Greece” with “member States” would open up the resolution to other countries, but it deals with Greece. I agree that other member States are not doing the right thing, but this resolution is about Greece, so let us not point to other member States.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 35 is rejected.*

We come now to Amendment 1. If it is carried, Amendment 2 will fall. I call Mr Kytýr to support the amendment.

Mr KYTÝR (*Czech Republic*) – We fully respect the necessity to help countries of first arrival and asylum seekers, but it is necessary to highlight that the member States of the Visegrad group declare that allocation must be done on national, voluntary basis. This foundation is in accordance with the conclusion of the European Council on 28 June 2018, and also in accordance with the position of the Parliament of the Czech Republic.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I understand the Czech Government's position, but any system that is voluntary simply will not work – it is an empty box. If we want solidarity between European Union member States so that we can solve this problem and have a new reallocation programme, it should not be voluntary because that simply will not work. I therefore do not accept the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 1 is rejected.*

I call Mr Kytýr to support Amendment 2.

Mr KYTÝR (*Czech Republic*) – As I mentioned earlier, the European Council has already adopted allocation on a voluntary basis. There is no reason why we are not able to follow that trend in the Parliamentary Assembly. A voluntary system of reallocation would be much more effective than quota directives.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I have already made my arguments. I am against the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 2 is rejected.*

I call Ms De Sutter to support Amendment 6 on behalf of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – The amendment is in the right place and would add to the text words to recognise that a common system of allocation is necessary to alleviate the burden on frontline European Union member States, such as Greece.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? That is not the case.

The committee is evidently in favour.

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – It is.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 6 is adopted.*

Amendment 7 was supported unanimously in committee, as was Amendment 18, so we will now proceed to vote on the whole of the draft resolution contained in Document 14837, as amended.

The vote is open.

*The draft resolution in Document 14837, as amended, is adopted, with 34 votes for, 8 against and 12 abstentions.*

We now come to the consideration of the draft recommendation, to which three amendments have been tabled. They will be taken in the order in which they appear in the Compendium. I remind colleagues that speeches on amendments are limited to 30 seconds.

I call Ms Günay to support Amendment 16.

Ms GÜNAY (*Turkey*) – I do not wish to press the amendment.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to move the amendment?

That is not the case, so Amendment 16 is not moved.

I call Mr Psychogios to support Amendment 36.

Mr PSYCHOGIOS (*Greece*) – I repeat that the European Commission publishes all data regarding sums, the responsible entities to whom the funds were allocated and the title of the actions. The process is under the strict scrutiny of the relevant services and there are no official reports of misappropriation of funds by the Greek authorities. The OLAF investigation has to do with non-governmental entities, so this part of the recommendation is completely unsubstantiated.

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – I am against the amendment for the reasons I have already given.

The PRESIDENT\* – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr MUNYAMA (*Poland*) – The committee is against, by a large majority.

The PRESIDENT\* – The vote is open.

*Amendment 36 is rejected.*

I call Ms De Sutter to support Amendment 8 on behalf of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.

Ms De SUTTER (*Belgium*) – The amendment states that of course the whole situation we have seen in the Greek islands has to do with the European Union-Turkey statement on 18 March 2016, which has celebrated its third anniversary. The Assembly has already been critical of the human rights impact of that statement. We have listed all the resolutions, so thought we needed to end by drawing attention to that point

The PRESIDENT\* – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment? That is not the case.

The committee is evidently in favour, so we will put the amendment to the vote.

The vote is open.

*Amendment 8 is adopted.*

We will now proceed to vote on the whole of the draft recommendation contained in Document 14837, as amended. I remind colleagues that a two-thirds majority is required.

The vote is open.

*The draft recommendation in Document 14837, as amended, is adopted, with 35 votes for, 9 against and 10 abstentions.*

Congratulations to the rapporteur, who has had a very busy week. I thank all those who took part in the debate.

**4. Next public business**

The PRESIDENT\* – The Assembly will hold its next public sitting tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. with the agenda that was approved on Monday. I wish colleagues a pleasant evening.

The sitting is closed.

*(The sitting was closed at 7.20 p.m.)*

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1. Announcement of the 2019 Europe Prize
2. Laundromats: responding to new challenges in the international fight against organised crime, corruption and money laundering

Presentation by Mr van de Ven of the report of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Document 14847 and Addendum

Speakers: Mr Masłowski, Ms de Bruijn-Wezeman, Ms Brynjólfsdóttir, Ms Engblom, Lord Anderson, Mr Herkel, Mr Kitev, Lord Balfe, Mr Marukyan, Mr Mollazade, Ms Aghayeva, Mr Igityan, Mr Aydin, Mr Avetisyan, Ms Gorghiu, Mr Lacroix, Mr Ghiletschi, Mr Melkumyan, Mr Huseynov, Mr Seyidov, Mr Xuclà, Ms Gafarova

Draft resolution in Document 14847, as amended, adopted

Draft recommendation in Document 14847 adopted

3. The situation of migrants and refugees on the Greek islands: more needs to be done

Presentation by Ms De Sutter of the report of the Committee on Migrants, Refugees and Displaced Persons, Document 14837

Speakers: Mr Fridez, Mr Evans, Mr van de Ven, Ms Christodouloupoulou, Mr Munyama, Baroness Massey, Mr Graas, Mr Varvitsiotis, Mr Essl, Ms Kavvadia, Ms Verdier-Jouclas, Mr Psychogios, Ms Günay, Mr Kyritsis

Draft resolution in Document 14837, as amended, adopted

Draft recommendation in Document 14837, as amended, adopted

4. Next public business



**Appendix / Annexe**

*Representatives or Substitutes who signed the register of attendance in accordance with Rule 12.2 of the Rules of Procedure. The names of members substituted follow (in brackets) the names of participating members.*

*Liste des représentants ou suppléants ayant signé le registre de présence, conformément à l'article 12.2 du Règlement. Le nom des personnes remplacées suit celui des Membres remplaçant, entre parenthèses.*

ÆVARSDÓTTIR, Thorhildur Sunna [Ms]  
 AGHAYEVA, Ulviyye [Ms]  
 ALTUNYALDIZ, Ziya [Mr]  
 ANDERSON, Donald [Lord] (*McCARTHY, Kerry [Ms]*)  
 AVETISYAN, Sos [Mr] (*RUBINYAN, Ruben [Mr]*)  
 AYDIN, Kamil [Mr]  
 BALFE, Richard [Lord] (*DUNDEE, Alexander [Lord]*)  
 BAYR, Petra [Ms] (*AMON, Werner [Mr]*)  
 BAZIN, Anaud [M.] (*DURANTON, Nicole [Mme]*)  
 BRUIJN-WEZEMAN, Reina de [Ms] (*MULDER, Anne [Mr]*)  
 BRYNJÓLFSDÓTTIR, Rósa Björk [Ms]  
 BUCCARELLA, Maurizio [Mr]  
 BÜCHEL, Roland Rino [Mr] (*HEER, Alfred [Mr]*)  
 BUTKEVIČIUS, Algirdas [Mr]  
 ČATOVIĆ, Marija Maja [Ms]  
 CHRISTODOULOPOULOU, Anastasia [Ms]  
 CHRISTOFFERSEN, Lise [Ms]  
 CILEVIČS, Boriss [Mr]  
 DE CARLO, Sabrina [Ms]  
 DIBRANI, Adnan [Mr] (*JALLOW, Momodou Malcolm [Mr]*)  
 ENGBLOM, Annicka [Ms] (*HAMMARBERG, Thomas [Mr]*)  
 ESSL, Franz Leonhard [Mr]  
 ESTRELA, Edite [Mme]  
 EVANS, Nigel [Mr]  
 FATALIYEVA, Sevinj [Ms] (*PASHAYEVA, Ganira [Ms]*)  
 FRIDEZ, Pierre-Alain [M.]  
 GAFAROVA, Sahiba [Ms]  
 GAVAN, Paul [Mr]  
 GHILETCHI, Valeriu [Mr]  
 GOGUADZE, Nino [Ms] (*KATSARAVA, Sofio [Ms]*)  
 GONÇALVES, Carlos Alberto [M.]  
 GORGHIU, Alina Ștefania [Ms]  
 GRAAS, Gusty [M.]  
 GRIN, Jean-Pierre [M.] (*MAURY PASQUIER, Liliane [Mme]*)  
 GÜNAY, Emine Nur [Ms]  
 HERKEL, Andres [Mr] (*TERIK, Tiit [Mr]*)  
 HOLEČEK, Petr [Mr] (*HAMOUSOVÁ, Zdeňka [Ms]*)  
 HOWELL, John [Mr]  
 HUSEYNOV, Rafael [Mr]  
 IGITYAN, Hovhannes [Mr]  
 KAVVADIA, Ioanneta [Ms]  
 KILIÇ, Akif Çağatay [Mr]  
 KIRAL, Serhii [Mr] (*LABAZIUK, Serhiy [Mr]*)  
 KITEV, Betian [Mr]  
 KOX, Tiny [Mr]  
 KYRITSIS, Georgios [Mr]  
 LACROIX, Christophe [M.]  
 LEGUILLE BALLOY, Martine [Mme] (*BOUYX, Bertrand [M.]*)  
 LEITE RAMOS, Luís [M.]  
 LORSCHÉ, Josée [Mme] (*MUTSCH, Lydia [Mme]*)  
 MANIERO, Alvise [Mr]  
 MARSCHALL, Matern von [Mr]  
 MARUKYAN, Edmon [Mr]  
 MASIULIS, Kęstutis [Mr] (*TAMAŠUNIENĖ, Rita [Ms]*)

MASŁOWSKI, Maciej [Mr]  
 MASSEY, Doreen [Baroness]  
 MELKUMYAN, Mikayel [M.] (*ZOHRABYAN, Naira [Mme]*)  
 MOLLAZADE, Asim [Mr] (*HAJIYEV, Sabir [Mr]*)  
 MONTILLA, José [Mr] (*GUTIÉRREZ, Antonio [Mr]*)  
 MÜLLER, Thomas [Mr]  
 MUNYAMA, Killion [Mr] (*MIESZKOWSKI, Krzysztof [Mr]*)  
 NENUTIL, Miroslav [Mr]  
 NICK, Andreas [Mr]  
 OHLSSON, Carina [Ms]  
 PISCO, Paulo [M.]  
 PRINGLE, Thomas [Mr] (*HOPKINS, Maura [Ms]*)  
 PSYCHOGIOS, Georgios [Mr] (*KASIMATI, Nina [Ms]*)  
 RAMPI, Roberto [Mr]  
 RIZZOTTI, Maria [Ms] (*FLORIS, Emilio [Mr]*)  
 SCHNEIDER-SCHNEITER, Elisabeth [Mme] (*LOMBARDI, Filippo [M.]*)  
 SCHOU, Ingjerd [Ms]  
 SCHWABE, Frank [Mr]  
 SEGER, Daniel [Mr] (*EBERLE-STRUB, Susanne [Ms]*)  
 SEYIDOV, Samad [Mr]  
 ŠIRCELJ, Andrej [Mr]  
 SOCOTAR, Gheorghe-Dinu [M.] (*PLEȘOIANU, Liviu Ioan Adrian [Mr]*)  
 STANĚK, Pavel [Mr]  
 SUTTER, Petra De [Ms] (*DUMERY, Daphné [Ms]*)  
 VALENTA, Jiří [Mr] (*BENEŠIK, Ondřej [Mr]*)  
 VAREIKIS, Egidijus [Mr]  
 VARVITSIOTIS, Miltiadis [Mr] (*BAKOYANNIS, Theodora [Ms]*)  
 VEN, Mart van de [Mr]  
 VERDIER-JOUCLAS, Marie-Christine [Mme] (*MAIRE, Jacques [M.]*)  
 WARBORN, Jörgen [Mr]  
 WENAWESER, Christoph [Mr]  
 WIECHEL, Markus [Mr]  
 WONNER, Martine [Mme] (*SORRE, Bertrand [M.]*)  
 XUCLÀ, Jordi [Mr] (*BARREIRO, José Manuel [Mr]*)  
 ZINGERIS, Emanuelis [Mr]

**Also signed the register / Ont également signé le registre****Representatives or Substitutes not authorised to vote /  
Représentants ou suppléants non autorisés à voter**

BOCCONE-PAGES, Brigitte [Mme]  
 GERMANN, Hannes [Mr]  
 REISS, Frédéric [M.]

**Observers / Observateurs**

VASCONCELOS, Héctor [Mr]

**Partners for democracy / Partenaires pour la démocratie**

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**Representatives of the Turkish Cypriot Community (In accordance to Resolution 1376 (2004) of the Parliamentary Assembly)/ *Représentants de la communauté chypriote turque***

***(Conformément à la Résolution 1376 (2004) de l'Assemblée parlementaire)***

CANDAN Armağan  
SANER Hamza Ersan