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Declaration of Nicosia

Adopted by the Standing Committee on 25 November 2016¹

Call for an inclusive constituent process to tackle today's challenges

Several momentous challenges confront today's Europe: terrorism, migratory pressure and refugee flows, increasing inequalities, the rise of Euro-scepticism, nationalism, populism and xenophobia, the persistence of frozen and open conflicts, the annexation or occupation of a neighbour's territories, and the re-emergence of divisions between Council of Europe member States.

The situation in Europe's neighbourhood is even more unstable and volatile, due to political and social tensions, insecurity and ongoing wars in Syria and Libya. At the same time, at global level, the geopolitical weight of Europe is receding.

It is urgent and imperative for the Council of Europe to adapt to today's context and be better equipped to tackle current challenges. The Parliamentary Assembly, as stated in its Sofia Declaration of 27 November 2015, has therefore launched a process of reflection on the need to organise a fourth Summit of Heads of State and Government of Council of Europe member States, which would provide the appropriate forum for relaunching the Council of Europe's core mission as a pan-European Organisation offering a common legal space to 820 million Europeans promoting our core values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

For its part, and in parallel with the overall reflection on the Organisation's role and functions, the Assembly should continue an in-depth reflection on its identity, role and mission as a statutory organ of the Organisation and, in a broader sense, as a European forum for inter-parliamentary dialogue which aims at having an impact in all Council of Europe member States.

In doing so, the Assembly should assess whether its mechanisms, tools and rules of internal functioning are still apt to achieve the results for which they were designed or whether they should be reviewed and updated to take account of the major changes that are under way.

To give the best chances of success to this process, including the preparation of a fourth Summit, the Assembly should rely on the active participation and engagement of all its national delegations.

¹ Submitted by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly