



SECRETARIAT

AS/Per (2020) CB 07

23 November 2020

To the members of the Standing Committee

Synopsis of the meeting held by videoconference on 20 November 2020

The **Standing Committee**, meeting on 20 November 2020 by videoconference, with Mr Rik Daems, President of the Assembly, in the Chair.

- held an exchange of views with Mr Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Special Representative of the Federal Government for the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Robert Spano, President of the European Court of Human Rights;
- ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Latvia and the Netherlands;
- approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;
- approved the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 12, 13, 22 and 23 October 2020;
- ratified the references proposed by the Bureau (Appendix 1);
- held a current affairs debate on “The Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship on: “Effectively responding to a public health crisis in full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law””;
- adopted a declaration on the parliamentary contribution to the Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship on: “Effectively responding to a public health crisis in full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law” (Appendix 2);
- adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

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| Resolution 2349 (2020) | Modification of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure on alternative arrangements for the organisation of Parliamentary Assembly part-sessions |
| Resolution 2350 (2020) | Modification of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure |
| Resolution 2351 (2020) | The gender dimension of foreign policy |
| Resolution 2352 (2020) | Threats to academic freedom and autonomy of higher education institutions in Europe |
| Recommendation 2189 (2020) | Threats to academic freedom and autonomy of higher education institutions in Europe |

- decided to hold its next meeting by videoconference at a date to be determined.¹

Alfred Sixto, Kateryna Gayevska

- cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
Director and all staff of the Secretariat of the Assembly
Secretaries of National Delegations and of Political Groups of the Assembly
Secretaries of observer and partner for democracy delegations
Secretary General of the Congress
Secretary to the Committee of Ministers
Directors General
Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Director of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights
Director of Communication
Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe

¹ In the meantime, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly has decided to convene the Standing Committee on 4 December 2020.

APPENDIX 1

References and transmissions to committees

A. REFERENCES TO COMMITTEES

1. **Track and trace applications: ethical, cultural and educational challenges**
Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Olivier Becht and other members of the Assembly
[Doc. 15165](#)

Reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for opinion*

2. **Combating antisemitism in Europe**
Motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination
[Doc. 15168](#)

Reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*

3. **Raising awareness of and countering Islamophobia in Europe**
Motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination
[Doc. 15169](#)

Reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*

4. **Closing the digital divide: promoting equal access to digital technologies**
Motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination
[Doc. 15170](#)

Reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*

5. **Which measures can States legally take under the European Convention on Human Rights in order to crack down on Islamic extremism?**
Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Pieter Omtzigt and other members of the Assembly
[Doc. 15175](#)

No further action

6. **Protecting the pillars of democracy during health crises**
Motion for a resolution tabled by Ms Marietta Karamanli and other members of the Assembly
[Doc. 15176](#)

Reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*

7. **Pushbacks on land and sea: illegal measures of migration management**
Motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons
[Doc. 15180](#)

Reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*

8. **European Union Pact on Migration and Asylum: a human rights perspective**
Motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons
[Doc. 15181](#)

Reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*

9. **Humanitarian consequences of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan**
Bureau decision

Reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*

APPENDIX 2

Declaration on the parliamentary contribution to the Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship on: “Effectively responding to a public health crisis in full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law”

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls its action and contribution towards efforts responding to the Covid-19 health crisis and its consequences, including its supporting efforts at national and Council of Europe levels to find viable and sustainable solutions to contain the pandemic.
2. The Assembly draws attention to the reports, recommendations and resolutions it adopted on various aspects of the crisis in June and October 2020, and calls for their full implementation:
 - a. [Lessons for the future from an effective and rights-based response to the Covid-19 pandemic](#)
 - b. [Democracies facing the Covid-19 pandemic](#);
 - c. [The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on human rights and the rule of law](#)
 - d. [Upholding human rights in times of crisis and pandemics: gender, equality and non-discrimination](#)
 - e. [Humanitarian consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic for migrants and refugees](#)
3. The Assembly reiterates its commitment to continue providing input to the important work carried out by the other Statutory Organ of the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers, including through the preparation of four additional reports focusing on Covid-19:
 - a. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education and culture
 - b. Impact of Covid-19 on children’s rights
 - c. Towards a Covid-19 vaccine: ethical, legal and practical considerations
 - d. Overcoming the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic
4. The Assembly stresses the importance of a human rights, rule of law and democracy centered approach in responding to the pandemic challenges.
5. Furthermore, the Assembly urges governments to ensure that all measures taken are gender-responsive, and special attention is placed on tackling increased risks of violence against women, including domestic violence, as well as on full respect of children’s rights.
6. The Assembly stresses the need for parliamentary scrutiny of all measures taken by the authorities when addressing the new waves of the novel coronavirus.
7. The Assembly welcomes progress as regards vaccine development and underlines the need to ensure equitable deployment to ensure its efficacy. It will debate this very issue during its January 2021 part-session from the ethical, legal and practical angle.
8. Taking into consideration all the above, the Assembly welcomes the Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship, as well as the “Secretary General’s Toolkit”, and resolves to continue working in close coordination with the Committee of Ministers to support the implementation of the standards, measures and policies contained therein.
9. Finally, the Assembly invites its Observers and Partners for democracy delegations to join forces with the Assembly in this regard.