



TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY

Secretariat of the Assembly

Synopsis

14 March 2008

The Bureau of the Assembly, meeting on 13 March 2008 in Paris, with Mr Lluís Maria de Puig, President of the Assembly, in the Chair, as regards:

- **2nd part of the 2008 ordinary session (Strasbourg, 14-18 April 2008):**
 - i. *Request for a current affairs debate*: took note of a request for a current affairs debate presented by 22 parliamentarians on the “Situation in the Middle East”;
 - ii. *Request for a debate under urgent procedure*: took note of a request for a debate under urgent procedure presented by the five chairpersons of the Assembly’s Political Groups, each acting on behalf of their group, on the “Functioning of democratic institutions in Armenia”;
 - iii. *Draft order of business*: updated the draft agenda;
 - iv. *Joint Committee*:
 - a. agreed to include the following items on the draft agenda for the meeting to be held on 17 April 2008 at 6.30 pm:
 - 1. The European Court of Human Rights: current and future developments;
 - 2. Council of Europe budget for 2009;
 - 3. Role of the Parliamentary Assembly at Council of Europe ministerial conferences;
 - 4. 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe;
 - b. took note of a letter from the Permanent Representative of Hungary concerning the Assembly’s proposal to establish a Committee of Ministers – Parliamentary Assembly working group to assist the Joint Committee in its work and referred it to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs for possible follow-up;
- **European Court of Human Rights: recent developments**: held an exchange of views with Mrs Bemelmans-Videc, Chairperson of the Sub-committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights (of the Committee

on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) on the following subjects: rejection of lists of candidates; Consultative Opinion of the Court of 12 February 2008; and election of a judge in respect of Ukraine;

- **External Relations of the Assembly: implementation of the proposals contained in Resolutions 1598 (2008) (Maghreb countries); 1599 (2008) (Republics of Central Asia); and 1600 (2008) (Observer states):** agreed to the proposals contained in the secretariat memorandum on this subject [AS/Bur (2008) 17];

- **Elections:**

i. *Presidential elections in Serbia: 2nd round (3 February 2008):* approved the report of the ad hoc Committee to observe these elections (Rapporteur: Mr Gross (Switzerland, SOC)) and declassified it;

ii. *Parliamentary elections in Monaco (3 February 2008):* approved the report of the ad hoc Committee to observe these elections (Rapporteur: Mr Laakso (Finland, UEL)) and declassified it;

iii. *Presidential elections in Armenia (19 February 2008):* heard an oral report by Mr Prescott (United Kingdom, SOC), Chairman of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections, on the pre-electoral, electoral and post-electoral missions carried out;

iv. *Presidential elections in the Russian Federation (2 March 2008):* approved the report of the ad hoc Committee to observe these elections (Rapporteur: Mr Gross (Switzerland, SOC)) and declassified it;

v. *Presidential elections in Montenegro (6 April 2008):* approved the composition of the ad hoc Committee to observe these elections and appointed Mr Wilshire (United Kingdom, EDG) as its Chairperson;

vi. *Parliamentary elections in Serbia (11 May 2008):* subject to receipt of an invitation:

a. agreed to set up an ad hoc Committee to observe these elections composed of thirty members, in accordance with the 'D'Hondt' system;

b. authorised a pre-electoral mission consisting of five members – one from each political group who were also members of the ad hoc Committee – on the understanding that it should take place approximately one month ahead of the elections;

- **References and transmissions to committees:** see Appendix I;

- **Application to initiate a monitoring procedure to investigate electoral fraud in the United Kingdom:** in accordance with the recommendation of the Monitoring Committee, recommended to the Assembly not to open such a procedure at this stage;

- **Communications:** took note of communications by the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, and of the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly;

- ***Cooperation agreement with the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan:***

i. took note of the annual report of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan on progress made in the promotion of principles established in the cooperation agreement with the Assembly and on the issue of capital punishment;

ii. held an exchange of views with a delegation from the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan and in particular with Mr Kopayev, Deputy Speaker of the Senate;

- ***2008 Debate on the state of democracy in Europe:*** following an exchange of views with Mr Greenway, one of the two rapporteurs, and with the Chairpersons of the Political Affairs Committee and the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, agreed to the proposals contained in a secretariat memorandum on the organisation and themes for the debate;

- ***Reconstitution of ad hoc Committees of the Bureau:***

i. *Ad hoc Committee on the implementation of Resolution 1416 (2005) on the conflict over the Nagorno Karabakh region dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference:* approved the composition of the ad hoc Committee and asked the Secretary General of the Assembly to contact the Chairpersons of the parliamentary delegations of Armenia and Azerbaijan in order to complete the list of members;

ii. *Ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Forum for the Future of Democracy:*

a. noted that the next Forum would be held in Madrid from 15 to 17 October 2008:

b. in conformity with past practice, the ad hoc Committee would be chaired by the Chairperson of the new Spanish delegation to the Assembly. It would consist of the members of the ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Forum for the Future of Democracy of the Political Affairs Committee and of Members of Assembly Committees concerned, to be appointed in the light of the programme for the Forum;

- ***2009 Budget:***

i. took note of a document prepared by Mr Wille, rapporteur of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development;

ii. held an exchange of views with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe;

- ***Apportionment of the allocation to political groups for 2008:*** agreed to postpone consideration of this item until its next meeting;

- ***Joint Conference of CIS Interparliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (St Petersburg, 4 April 2008):*** took note of a preliminary draft declaration; and authorised Mrs Jonker, Chairperson of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, to finalise it in St Petersburg;

- ***Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2008:*** noted that the President had appointed Mr van der Linden (Netherlands, EPP/CD) to

represent the Assembly on the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) and on the High-level group entrusted with examining the follow-up to the Juncker report;

- ***Change in the composition of the Monitoring Committee and the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs:*** approved the proposal for new members as presented by political groups for ratification by the Assembly:

- i. *Monitoring Committee:* Mr Strässer (Germany, SOC);
- ii. *Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs:* Mr. Kumcuoğlu (Turkey, EDG);

- ***Meetings elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris:*** authorised the following meetings:

- i. *Sub-Committee on external relations* of the Political Affairs Committee: St Petersburg (Russian Federation), 3-4 April 2008;
- ii. *Ad hoc Committee* of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population: Tangiers (Morocco), 23-26 April 2008;

- ***Assembly representatives for official activities:***

i. *Appointments of Assembly Representatives for official activities:* in reply to formal invitation took the following decisions:

a. Mr Schneider (France, EPP/CD): Council of Europe 2008 exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue, Strasbourg, 8 April 2008;

b. Mr Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG): Eurasian media forum conference, Almaty (Kazakhstan), 24-26 April 2008;

ii. *Reports by Assembly representatives on their participation in official activities:* took note of a report by Mr Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD) who participated in the OSCE parliamentary assembly winter session held in Vienna on 21 and 22 February 2008;

- ***Council of Europe Strategy on Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level:*** following a request by the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture, and Local and Regional Affairs, adopted a declaration on the Strategy of the Council of Europe on Innovation and Good Governance at Local Level;

- ***Rules on secret ballots in committees:*** referred this matter to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs for follow-up;

- ***Visits by rapporteurs:*** authorised Mr Iwinski, rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee on the request by the parliament of Kazakhstan for observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly, to visit Kazakhstan for the purposes of his report;

- ***Date and place of forthcoming meetings:*** decided to hold the following meetings:

- . Strasbourg, Monday 14 April 2008 at 8 am;
- . Strasbourg, Friday 18 April 2008 at 8.30 am;
- . Stockholm (Sweden), Thursday 29 May 2008 (time to be confirmed)

APPENDIX I

References and transmissions to committees

The Bureau approved the following references and modifications of references, subject to ratification by the Assembly:

A. REFERENCES TO COMMITTEES

1. **Doc. 11468**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Pourgourides and others
The follow-up to the issue of political prisoners in Azerbaijan, decision postponed until June 2008
2. **Doc. 11501**
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Pashayeva and others
Destruction of Azerbaijani historic monuments, to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education *for information*
3. **Doc. 11503**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Err and others
Impact of electoral systems on women's representation in politics, to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for report* and to the Political Affairs Committee *for opinion*
4. **Doc. 11504**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Mendes Bota and others
"Parliaments united in combating domestic violence against women": review of the Council of Europe Campaign and prospects, to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for report*
5. **Doc. 11505**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr McIntosh and others
Respect for media freedom, to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education *for taking into account in the preparation of the report on "The role of media for democracy"* (Doc. 10935, ref. 3249)
6. **Doc. 11507**
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Badé and others
Euro-Mediterranean: call for a Council of Europe strategy, to the Political Affairs Committee *for report*, and to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development *for opinion*

B. REQUESTS TO MODIFY A REFERENCE

1. **Doc. 10916**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Jurgens and others
Legal remedies for human rights violations in the North-Caucasus Region
Ref. No. 3277 of 2 October 2006 (modification of Ref. No. 3243 of 26 June 2006), decision postponed until June 2008, after the visit by the co-rapporteurs of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) to the Russian Federation, provisionally scheduled on 21-23 April 2008

2. **Doc. 11423**
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Jurgens and others
Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity
Ref. No. 3393 of 21 January 2008, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *to take it into account in the preparation of one single report* and to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for opinion* (Doc. 10640, ref. 3134, and Doc.10832, ref. 3188)

C. CONSULTATION OF A COMMITTEE

1. **Doc. 11271**
Motion for a resolution presented by Lord Russell-Johnston and others
The state of health of Mr Abdullah Ocalan. In a letter dated 11 March 2008, the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights informs the President of the Assembly that it decided to postpone consideration of the issue until its next meeting.

D. REQUEST TO EXTEND REFERENCE

1. **Doc. 10815**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Evin and others
Strengthening of the co-operation between Council of Europe member states to prevent and tackle health risks linked to the development of pandemics
Ref. No. 3181 of 17 March 2006 – Validity: 17 March 2008, extension until 17 September 2008