



BUREAU OF THE ASSEMBLY

AS/Bur/CB (2018) 02

30 January 2018

To the Members of the Assembly

Synopsis of the meeting held in Strasbourg on 26 January 2018

The Bureau of the Assembly, meeting on Friday 26 January 2018 in Strasbourg, with Mr Michele Nicoletti, President of the Assembly, in the Chair, as regards:

- **First part-session of 2018 (Strasbourg, 22-26 January):** held an exchange of views on the first-part session;
- **Standing Committee meeting (Paris, 16 March 2018):** took note of the draft agenda;
- **Second part-session of 2018 (Strasbourg, 23-27 April):** drew up the preliminary draft agenda;
- **References and transmissions to committees:** approved the references and transmissions as set out in Appendix 1, subject to ratification by the Assembly through an addendum to the Progress report;
- **Election observation:**
 - i. *Montenegro: presidential election (15 April 2018):* approved the list of members of the Ad hoc Committee to observe this election (subject to receiving their declarations on conflict of interest) as set out in Appendix 2 and appointed Mr Jonas Gunnarsson (Sweden, SOC) as Chairperson of the Ad hoc Committee;
- **Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the 2018 financial year:** held an exchange of views on the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly and approved the proposals contained therein (Appendix 3);
- **Issues raised by committees:** considered the requests for fact-finding visits submitted by Rapporteurs, invited the Secretary General of the Assembly to explore the possibility of having their costs covered by the respective Parliaments, and decided to authorise them, provided that the Rapporteurs' travel and accommodation costs are covered by their respective national parliaments; or, should this not be the case, subject to availability of financial resources of the Assembly:
 - i. *Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons:*
 - fact-finding visit to Egypt by Ms Tineke Strik (Netherlands, SOC), Rapporteur on "*Human rights impacts of the "external dimension" of European Union asylum and migration policy: out of sight, out of rights?*", to be carried out in the first quarter of 2018 in the framework of the preparation of her report;
 - fact-finding visit to Lebanon by Mr Manlio Di Stefano (Italy, NR), Rapporteur on "*The humanitarian situation of refugees in the countries neighbouring Syria*", to be carried out in 2018 in the framework of the preparation of his report;

- ii. *Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy*: fact-finding visit to Morocco by Mr Bogdan Klich (Poland, EPP/CD), Rapporteur on “*The evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco*”, to be conducted in 2018 in the framework of the preparation of his report;
- **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)**: approved the recommendation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to invite the delegation of Spain to submit a new list of candidates to the CPT;
- **Composition of the Monitoring Committee, the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights:**
- i. *Monitoring Committee*: on the basis of proposals by the EPP/CD Group, appointed Mr Peter Beyer (Germany), Ms Sanja Putica (Croatia), Mr Xavier García Albiol (Spain) and Ms Nicole Durantou (France);
- ii. *Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs*:
 - on the basis a proposal by the SOC Group, appointed Ms Marianne Mikko (Estonia);
 - on the basis of a proposal by the ALDE Group, appointed Mr Michael Link (Germany);
 - on the basis of proposals by the EPP/CD Group, appointed Mr Matern von Marschall (Germany) and Mr Miltiadis Varvitsiotis (Greece);
- iii. *Committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights*: on the basis of a proposal by the SOC Group, appointed Mr Martin Whitfield (United Kingdom) as an alternate;
- **Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2018**: approved the appointments as set out in Appendix 4 and asked the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to come back to the Bureau with a revised proposal concerning the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) to ensure a more balanced political representation;
- **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize**: took note of the launch of the 2018 edition of the Prize;
- **Meetings of the Bureau, Standing Committee and Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau on the role and mission of the Parliamentary Assembly in Paris (15 and 16 March 2018)**: took note of the draft programme;
- **Meetings elsewhere than Strasbourg and Paris**: authorised:
 - the Sub-Committee on Refugee and Migrant Children and Young People of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons and the Sub-committee on Culture, Diversity and Heritage of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media to hold a joint meeting in London on 26 March 2018;
 - the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to meet in Reykjavik on 22-23 May 2018;
- **Other business:**
- i. *Independent investigation body on the allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly*: decided to hold an additional meeting on Sunday 22 April 2018 to have an exchange of views with the three members of the independent investigation body on its final report;
- ii. *Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the Standing Committee (26 January – 22 April 2018)*: appointed Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier (Switzerland, SOC) as Rapporteur;

- **Date and place of next meetings:** decided to hold its meetings as follows:

Thursday, 15 March 2018, Paris, at 3 pm;
Sunday, 22 April 2018, Strasbourg at 3 pm;
Monday, 23 April 2018, Strasbourg, at 8 am;
Friday, 27 April 2018, Strasbourg, at 8.30 am;
Thursday, 31 May 2018, Zagreb, afternoon;
Monday, 25 June 2018, Strasbourg, at 8 am;
Friday, 29 June 2018, Strasbourg, at 8.30 am;
Monday, 3 September 2018, Paris, at 9 am.

Sonia Sirtori, Angela Garabagiu

Copy to:

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

Appendix 1

References and transmissions to committees

A. References and transmissions to committees

[Doc. 14458](#), motion for a resolution, Towards a system of monitoring and regulation to counter misinformation in and manipulation by social media: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report*

B. Modification of references

[Doc. 14380](#), motion for a resolution, Defining guidelines for international NGOs (Ref. 4331 of 13 October 2017) reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for opinion*

[Doc. 13812](#), motion for a resolution, Libya's future between the threats of terrorism and a democratic prospect (Ref. 4140 of 26 June 2015) reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report* and to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for opinion*

C. Extension of references

[Doc. 13979](#), motion for a resolution, Detention of Palestinian minors in Israeli prisons (Ref. 4200 of 22 April 2016 – validity: 22 April 2018): extension until 31 December 2018

[Doc. 14033](#), motion for a resolution, A potential threat to European countries imposed by the nuclear power plant in Belarus (Ref. 4225 of 24 June 2016 – validity: 24 June 2018): extension until 31 December 2018

[Doc. 12866](#), motion for a resolution, The political transition in Egypt (Ref. 3857 of 23 April 2012 – validity: 30 April 2018): extension until 30 June 2018

[Doc. 13812](#), motion for a resolution, Libya's future between the threats of terrorism and a democratic prospect (Ref. 4140 of 26 June 2015 – validity: 31 January 2018): extension until 15 March 2018

[Doc. 14000](#), motion for a resolution, Protecting human rights defenders in Council of Europe member States (Ref. 4202 of 22 April 2016 – validity: 22 April 2018): extension until 30 September 2018

Appendix 2

List of members of the ad hoc committee to observe the presidential election in Montenegro (15 April 2018)

Chairperson / Président: Mr / M. Jonas GUNNARSSON (SOC, Sweden / Suède)

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)

Ms / Mme Elena CENTEMERO, Italy / Italie
Ms / Mme Marie-Christine DALLOZ, France
Ms / Mme Alina Ștefania GORGHIU, Romania / Roumanie

Substitutes / suppléants

Ms / Mme Boriana ÅBERG, Sweden / Suède
Ms / Mme Nicole DURANTON, France
Ms / Mme Iryna GERASHCHENKO, Ukraine
Ms / Mme Sylvie GOY-CHAVENT, France
Ms / Mme Martine MERGEN, Luxembourg
Mr / M. Tritan SHEHU, Albania / Albanie
Mr / M. Egidijus VAREIKIS, Lithuania / Lituanie
Mr / M. Vetle Wang SOLEIM, Norway / Norvège

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group / Groupe Socialistes, démocrates et verts (SOC)

Mr / M. Paolo CORSINI, Italy / Italie
Ms / Mme Didem ENGIN, Turkey / Turquie
Mr / M. Jonas GUNNARSSON, Sweden / Suède

Substitutes / suppléants

Mr / M. George FOULKES, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
Mr / M. Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria / Autriche
Ms / Mme Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR, Iceland / Islande
Mr / M. Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ, Switzerland / Suisse
Mr / M. José CEPEDA, Spain / Espagne
Mr / M. Jan SKOBERNE, Slovenia / Slovénie
Mr / M. Jérôme LAMBERT, France
Ms / Mme Idália SERRÃO, Portugal
Mr / M. Florian KRONBICHLER, Italy / Italie
Mr / M. Antonio GUTIÉRREZ, Spain / Espagne

European Conservatives Group (EC) / Groupe des conservateurs européens (CE)

Mr / M. Oleksii GONCHARENKO, Ukraine
Mr / M. Suat ÖNAL, Turkey / Turquie

Substitutes / suppléants

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Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) /

Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe (ADLE)

Ms / Mme Emilie Enger MEHL, Norway / Norvège
Mr / M. Robert TROY, Ireland / Irlande

Substitutes / suppléants

Mr / M. Aleksandar STEVANOVIĆ, Serbia / Serbie
Mr / M. Anne MULDER, Netherlands / Pays-Bas
Mr / M. Jokin BILDARRATZ, Spain / Espagne
Mr / M. Thomas MÜLLER, Switzerland / Suisse
Mr / M. Claude KERN, France
Mr / M. Jordi XUCLA, Spain / Espagne
Mr / M. Alfred HEER, Switzerland / Suisse

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) / Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)
Mr / M. Marco NICOLINI, San Marino / Saint-Marin

Substitutes / suppléants

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Free Democrats Group (FDG) / Groupe des démocrates libres (GDL)
Mr / M. Fazil MUSTAFA, Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan

Substitutes / suppléants

...

Co-rapporteurs AS/MON (*ex officio*)

Mr / M. Andrea RIGONI, Italy / Italie
Mr / M. Ionut-Marian STROE, Romania / Roumanie

Appendix 3

Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the 2018 financial year

Introduction

1. At its meeting on 15 December 2017, the Bureau discussed the expenditure of the Assembly for 2018. In that context, it took note of the decision by the Turkish Government to discontinue its status as a major contributor to the budget of the Council of Europe as from the end of 2017. The effect of the cessation of Turkey's major contributor status is a decrease in its 2018 contributions of a total of € 19.6 million across all budgets concerned. It entails a reduction of € 14.8 million in the Ordinary Budget of the Council of Europe (6.3% of the Ordinary Budget initially foreseen for 2018).
2. Furthermore, the Bureau was informed that on 22 November 2017, the Committee of Ministers had adopted the Council's General Budget for 2018-2019 with a continued policy of zero nominal growth, and not a policy of zero real growth of 0.5% as anticipated, which entailed further cuts of € 2.8 million in the Ordinary Budget. The total cuts in the Council's Ordinary Budget therefore amount to almost € 18 million.
3. The budget of the Assembly is a part of the Ordinary Budget of the Council of Europe. The expenditure of the Assembly as foreseen for 2018 amounts to € 17 498 400 (see Appendix) – of which almost € 11.4 million is to cover the cost of staff and related contributions to the Pension budget, while € 6.1 million is to cover operational expenditure. More than half of the operational expenditure of the Assembly covers the cost of interpretation/translation in the Assembly. In view of the decision taken by the Turkish Government and of the decision of the Committee of Ministers to maintain a zero nominal growth policy, the Assembly's budget for 2018 will inevitably also have to be accordingly reduced.
4. When in 2015 Turkey decided to become a major contributor to the budget of the Council of Europe, the Assembly's budget was increased by € 900 000 to cover the cost of introducing Turkish as a working language of the Assembly (€ 700 000) and to increase operational capacities of the Assembly (€ 200 000). It would therefore be logical to expect that the budget of the Assembly should now be decreased by the corresponding amount of € 900 000. However, this amount will be more substantial due to the decision of the Committee of Ministers to maintain the zero nominal growth policy.
5. Taking account of the fact that working languages in the Assembly correspond in principle to the languages of the major contributors, the Bureau of the Assembly asked the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs to prepare a report modifying the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, notably with a view to removing Turkish from the list of working languages of the Assembly. Until the Rules of Procedure are changed on this point, possibly on 16 March 2018 on the occasion of the Standing Committee, the inevitable costs for the Assembly to provide Turkish interpretation will be € 100 000. Therefore, the minimum expected cuts in the operational budget of the Assembly (in addition to the removal of Turkish from the list of working languages) should be at least at the level of € 300 000 (€ 200 000 mentioned in para. 4 plus € 100 000 mentioned just above).
6. I will in due course present to the Bureau the proposed details of the 2018 budgetary reductions for the Assembly. However, I am seeking already now the approval by the Bureau to introduce with immediate effect certain measures affecting also the organisation of work by committees. These measures are outlined below. The aim is to apply these measures consistently with respect to all nine committees.
7. The Assembly may also expect certain cuts in its staff expenditure. I will discuss this question further with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and come back to the Bureau with relevant information in due course.
8. In view of the budgetary situation of the Council of Europe, the Bureau and subsequently the Assembly may be obliged to proceed with a general review of its priorities and working methods in order to respond to the growing financial pressure.

Interpretation during committee meetings

9. Before committee meetings held elsewhere than in Strasbourg during the part-sessions weeks, members and secretaries of national delegations are invited to complete a participation form in which they are also asked to confirm the need for interpretation into the Assembly's working languages (German, Italian, Russian, and until the Rules of Procedure are changed - Turkish). Henceforth, those languages will be cancelled if no request has been received 21 calendar days before the meeting (up until now 14 calendar days). In addition, secretaries of national delegations will be asked to confirm the need for working languages only when members are sure to attend and cannot express themselves in one of the official languages. An option of passive interpretation of working languages as an alternative will also be further explored.

Interpretation into one of the working languages during committee meetings will need to be confirmed 21 calendar days before the meeting.

Expected savings: €40 000 (5% of the expenses for 2017)

Translation of committee documents

10. In order to reduce translation costs, the aim is to reduce the length of all committee documents, including expert reports, documents submitted by rapporteurs and explanatory memoranda. Written interventions by experts will be available in their original language only, either in English or French. The same applies for other information documents which are not official committee documents with a reference.

11. Minutes of committee meetings will in principle be limited to five pages. For each item on the agenda there will be a list of those who spoke, a summary of the points discussed and/or a summing-up by the Chairperson.

The length of committee documents will be limited, in particular explanatory memoranda and information documents. Minutes of committee meetings will in principle be limited to five pages.

Expected savings: €40 000

Committee meetings

12. Whenever possible, committees are invited to reduce the number of meetings held outside part-session weeks. Furthermore, no derogation will be granted to hold any additional meetings outside Strasbourg or Paris (beyond one "annual ticket" meeting) in view of their high interpretation costs. An additional measure might be worth considering – with interpretation for annual committee meetings outside Strasbourg/Paris being limited to English/French and other languages being available only if provided by the hosting Parliament. In general, rules applicable to committee meetings outside Strasbourg/Paris might require reviewing with the aim of reducing their number and frequency.

Whenever possible, committees are invited to hold fewer meetings in 2018.

Expected savings: €45 000 (3 meetings in Paris less) + €250 000 (if only English/French interpretation for meetings outside Strasbourg/Paris)

Committee files

13. For committee meetings outside Strasbourg, participants will be asked to print and bring their own files which have been sent to them electronically and which are available on the Assembly's extranet. No files will be distributed on the spot.

For committee meetings outside Strasbourg, participants will be asked to bring their own files.

Expected savings: €15 000

Fact-finding visits by committee rapporteurs

14. As from 2018, fact-finding visits by committee rapporteurs funded from the Assembly budget will in principle be limited to one for each report, two in the case of the Monitoring Committee. The duration of such visits should be limited to maximum 2-3 days. Fact-finding visits which have already taken place in the framework of reports currently under preparation will be taken into account in this context. Exceptions may be granted by the Secretary General of the Assembly, after consultation with the relevant committee Chairperson.

Fact-finding visits by rapporteurs will in principle be limited to one per report, two in the case of the Monitoring Committee.

Expected savings: €15 000

Co-operation activities of the Assembly

15. Co-operation activities of the Assembly (seminars for parliamentarians and/or parliamentary staff) will – in principle – be limited to those for which supplementary financing may be assured (via EU joint programmes, voluntary contributions, including for specific projects such as parliamentary campaigns, etc.).

Co-operation activities of the Assembly are to be reduced.

Expected savings: €145 000

Conclusion

16. The Bureau is invited to approve the above measures proposed by the Secretary General of the Assembly, with immediate effect. Thereafter, the Bureau may have to review these measures at its meeting in April or June 2018.

Appendix 4**Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly**

Body	who represents the Assembly	reference	2018
I. Council of Europe bodies			
European Commission for Democracy through Law Venice Commission	Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau to attend the sessions of the Commission	Article 2.4 of the Venice Commission Statute (Res CM (2002) 3)	Members: Ms Kyriakides, EPP/CD appointment by the President Substitute:
Council on Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission	Representatives of AS/Pol, AS/Jur and AS/Mon approved by the Bureau of the Assembly	Bureau decision of 10 March 2003	Members : Lord Balfe - EC (AS/Jur) Mr Cozmanziuc – EPP/CD (AS/Pol) Substitutes : Ms Beselia - SOC (AS/Jur) Mr Xuclà - ALDE (AS/Pol)
European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity North-South Centre	Two members of the Executive Council - appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly	Article 4.2 (b) of the North-South Centre revised Statute (Res CM (2011) 6)	Members : Ms Günay - EC (AS/Soc) Mr Leite Ramos – EPP/CD (AS/Cult) Substitutes : Mr Gonçalves - EPP/CD (AS/Cult) Mr Schennach - SOC (AS/Soc)
European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance ECRI	Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau (representatives of the following three committees: AS/Pol, AS/Ega and AS/Cult)	Article 5 of the ECRI Statute (Res CM (2002) 8)	Members : Mr Sorre - NR (AS/Cult) Mr Corlăţean - SOC (AS/Pol) Mr Thiéry – ALDE (AS/Ega) Substitutes : Mr Davies - EC (AS/Ega)
Group of States against Corruption GRECO	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau	CM decision of 717th meeting in 2000 in accordance with Article 7.2 of the Statute of the GRECO	Member : Mr Logvynskyi- EPP/CD (AS/Jur) Substitute: Ms Sotnyk – ALDE (AS/Jur)
Committee for Works of Art	Two members appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly (at present AS/Cult Committee member and Museum Prize rapporteur)	CM decision of 482nd meeting in 1992	Members: Lady Eccles – EC (AS/Cult) Ms Gambaro – FDG (AS/Cult)
MONEYVAL	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau	Article 4.1 of Resolution CM/Res (2010) 12	Member: Mr Corlăţean - SOC (AS/Jur) Substitute: Mr van de Ven – ALDE (AS/Jur)
Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau	STCE n°221 CM(2017)32, Chapter V, Article 23.1	Mr Schennach – SOC (AS/Cult)
II. Other			
EUROPA NOSTRA Pan-European Federation for Heritage	One member (and substitute) to be nominated by the Assembly - to attend the Federation Council meetings as observer	Article 21.4 of the Statute of Europa Nostra	Mr Gryffroy – NR (AS/Cult)