



**TO THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AFFAIRS
AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly

Synopsis No 2004/74

15 June 2004

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Berlin (Germany) on 7 and 8 June 2004 with Mr Lintner in the Chair, as regards:

- *Cross-border crime in Europe* (Rapporteur: Mrs Wohlwend, Liechtenstein, EPP/CD): held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms Brigitte Zypries, Minister of Justice of the German Federal Government, and Mr Guy De Vel, Director-General of Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe;
- *Abolition of restrictions on the right to vote in general elections* (Rapporteur: Mr Akçam, Turkey, LDR): considered an introductory memorandum presented by the Rapporteur and decided to ask, through the Venice Commission, for an opinion of the Council for Democratic Elections on the questions raised in the memorandum;
- *Circumstances leading to the arrest and prosecution of leading Yukos executives* (Rapporteur: Mrs Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, Germany, LDR): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on her visit to Moscow on 24-27 May 2004 and authorised her to make a further visit to Moscow in order to meet with persons that she was unable to meet in May;
- *Death penalty*: was informed about a recent private members bill introduced in the French National Assembly, seeking to restore the death penalty for the perpetrators of acts of terrorism, and took note of a written declaration prepared by Mrs Wohlwend (Liechtenstein, EPP/CD), the Committee's Rapporteur;
- held an exchange of views with Ms Christa Nickels MP, Chairperson of the Committee on Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid of the German Bundestag;
- *Human rights situation in the Chechen Republic* (Rapporteur: Mr Bindig, Germany, SOC): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his visits to Moscow, Grozny and Nazran from 31 May to 5 June 2004, instructed its Rapporteur to prepare a draft report to be considered at its meeting on 6 September 2004 in view of its presentation to the Assembly at its Autumn 2004 part-session;
- *Implementation of decisions of the European Court of Human Rights* (Rapporteur: Mr Jurgens, Netherlands, SOC): considered an introductory memorandum presented by the Rapporteur;
- *Political prisoners in Europe* (Rapporteur: Mr Bruce, United Kingdom, LDR): considered an information note presented by the Rapporteur on his visit to Azerbaijan on 10-12 May 2004;
- *Human rights situation in Kosovo* (Rapporteur: Mr Lloyd, United Kingdom, SOC): took note of letters addressed by the Ombudsperson for Kosovo, Mr Nowicki, to the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations concerning the situation of internally displaced Ashkali families, and to government ministers in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands, concerning forcible returns of refugees of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian ethnicity to Kosovo;

- *Torture*: took note of a written declaration prepared by Mr Jaskiernia (Poland, SOC) concerning recent events which threatened the absolute prohibition on the use of torture;
- *Situation in Iraq*: took note of the Political Affairs Committee's request to the Bureau for an urgent debate on Iraq to be held during the Assembly's June part-session, and decided to request the Bureau propose to the Assembly to instruct it to prepare an opinion should the debate be held;
- *Appointment of rapporteurs*:
 - o *Position of the Parliamentary Assembly as regards the Council of Europe member and observer States which have not abolished the death penalty*: Mrs Wohlwend (Liechtenstein, EPP/CD);
 - o *Human rights of conscript soldiers*: Mr Arabadjiev (Bulgaria, SOC);
- *Appointment of representatives*:
 - o Hearing on Disappeared persons in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine (Ukrainian Parliament, Kyiv, 18 June 2004): Mr Pourgourides (Cyprus, EPP/CD);
 - o Venice Commission (Venice, 18-19 June 2004): proposed Mr Holovaty (Ukraine, LDR) to replace Mr Jurgens (Netherlands, SOC) who was unable to participate in this meeting;
 - o European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) (Strasbourg, 21-25 June 2004): Mr McNamara (United Kingdom, SOC);

and resuming its meeting on 8 June 2004 with Mr Lintner in the Chair, as regards:

- *The concept of "nation"* (Rapporteur: Mr Frunda, Romania, EPP/CD): held a hearing with the participation of Professor Peter Kovacs (University of Miskolc, Hungary), Professor Stéphane Pierré-Caps (University of Nancy, France) and Mr Stanko Nick, Member of the Venice Commission on behalf of Croatia;
- *Next meetings*:
 - . Strasbourg, during the Assembly third part-session (21-25 June 2004),
 - . Paris, Monday 6 September 2004 at 9 h 30 (Council of Europe Office)

Danielle Coin, Günter Schirmer, Valérie Clamer, David Milner

cc: Secretary General and secretariat of the Assembly
 Secretaries of National Delegations to the Assembly
 Secretaries of Political Groups of the Assembly
 Directors General
 Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
 Secretary to the Committee of Ministers
 Director of Communication and Research
 Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe