

1 July 2008
Synopsis AS/Jur No 2008/05

To the Members of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Synopsis of the meetings held in Strasbourg from 23 to 26 June 2008

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Strasbourg

- on 23 June 2008 at 14 h with Mrs Herta Däubler-Gmelin (Germany, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:
 - ***Freedom of religion and other human rights for non-Muslim minorities in Turkey and for Muslim minorities in Thrace (Western Greece)*** (*Rapporteur: Mr Michel Hunault, France, EDG*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his fact-finding visit to Greece on 16-19 June 2008 and held an exchange of views with the following experts:
 - Ms Asli Bilge, Lecturer at the University of Yeditepe (Istanbul) and Research Assistant at the CNRS Centre for Politics, Religion, Institutions, Society and Transformation in Europe (PRISME)
 - Mr Konstantinos Tsitselikis, Assistant Professor of Human Rights in the Department of Balkan, Slavic and Oriental Studies, University of Macedonia, Greece
 - Mr Alain Chablais, Executive Secretary *ad interim*, Framework Convention for the Protection of national minorities;
 - ***Exchange of views with human rights defenders from the North Caucasus region***: decided to hold this exchange of views on Wednesday 25 June 2008 at 14 h;
 - ***The death penalty in Council of Europe observer states***: heard a statement by Mrs Wohlwend (Liechtenstein, EPP/CD), announcing her intention to table a motion for a resolution/recommendation on this issue.
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- on 24 June 2008 at 8 h 30 with Mrs Herta Däubler-Gmelin in the Chair:
 - carried out a ***visit to the European Court of Human Rights***.

- **on 24 June 2008 at 14 h 20** with Mrs Herta Däubler-Gmelin in the Chair, as regards:
 - ***Conference on specific challenges facing European democracies – the case of diversity and migration and measures to improve the democratic participation of migrants (Strasbourg, 24 June 2008)***: appointed Mr Boriss Cilevičs (Latvia, SOC) to take part in this Conference;
 - ***Candidates for the European Court of Human Rights (Rapporteur: Mrs Marie-Louise Bemelmans-Videc, Netherlands, EPP/CD)***: considered and approved a draft report and adopted a draft resolution, with a view to presenting them at the Assembly's 4th part-session of 2008;
 - ***Investigation of crimes allegedly committed by high officials during the Kuchma rule in Ukraine (Rapporteur: Mrs Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, Germany, ALDE)***: considered and approved a draft report and adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation, with a view to presenting them at a forthcoming session of the Assembly;
 - ***Allegations of politically-motivated abuses of the criminal justice system in Council of Europe member states (Rapporteur: Mrs Sabine Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger, Germany, ALDE)***:
 - considered an introductory memorandum;
 - authorised the Rapporteur to carry out fact-finding visits to London, Paris, Berlin and Moscow;
 - decided to ask the Venice Commission to prepare an opinion on European standards as regards the independence of the judicial system;
 - ***Sub-Committee on Human Rights (Chairperson: Mr Jean-Charles Gardetto, Monaco, EPP/CD)***: heard a report by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the meeting held in Strasbourg on 24 June 2008, and endorsed the proposals of the Sub-Committee concerning the list of candidates to the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) submitted by the parliamentary delegation of the Slovak Republic;
 - ***The situation of human rights defenders in Council of Europe member states (Rapporteur: Mr Holger Haibach, Germany, EPP/CD)***: considered a supplementary introductory memorandum and decided to ask the Bureau to extend the mandate until 31 January 2009;
 - ***Situation in Cyprus***: decided to ask the Bureau to be seized for opinion on the report currently under preparation in the Political Affairs Committee.

- **on 25 June 2008 at 14 h** with Mr Christos Pourgourides (Cyprus, EPP/CD), 1st Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, as regards:
 - ***Exchange of views with human rights defenders from the North Caucasus region***: held an exchange of views with the participation of:
 - Mr Oleg Orlov, President of the human rights centre "Memorial"
 - Mrs Svetlana Isaeva, representative of "Mothers of Dagestan"
 - Mr Magomet Mutsolgov, Director of the Ingush NGO "MASHR";
 - ***Legal remedies for human rights violations in the North-Caucasus Region (Rapporteur: Mr Dick Marty, Switzerland, ALDE)***: confirmed the Rapporteur's appointment and authorised him to carry out a fact-finding visit to the region;
 - ***Appointment of rapporteurs***:
 - ***Inhumane treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs in Kosovo***: Mr Dick Marty (Switzerland, ALDE)
 - ***Draft Council of Europe Convention on Access to Official Documents***: Mr Klaas de Vries (Netherlands, SOC);

- **Motion for a resolution: “Secret detention centres: clarifying the allegations”**: following a request for an opinion from the Bureau on the possible follow-up to be given to this motion, decided not to request to be seized of the motion contained in Doc 11398, since clarifications were not necessary, and asked its Chairperson to inform the Bureau accordingly;
- **Appointment of representatives of the Committee:**
 - Conference on “Ethnic Stability – Ethnic Changes” (organised by the Forum Minority Research Institute) (Bratislava, 29-30 September 2008): Mr Boriss Cilevičs (Latvia, SOC).

- **on 26 June 2008 at 9 h 15** with Mrs Marie-Louise Bemelmans-Videc (Netherlands, EPP/CD) in the Chair:
- held an **exchange of views with Mr Erik Fribergh, Registrar of the European Court of Human Rights** (at a joint meeting with the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development).

- **on 26 June 2008 at 14 h** with Mrs Herta Däubler-Gmelin in the Chair, as regards:
- **Gökçeada (Imbros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos): preserving the bicultural character of the two Turkish islands as a model for cooperation between Turkey and Greece in the interest of the people concerned** (Rapporteur: Mr Andreas Gross, Switzerland, SOC): took position on the amendments to the draft resolution;
- **Sub-Committee on Rights of Minorities** (Chairperson: Mr József Berényi, Slovak Republic, EPP/CD): heard a report by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the meeting held in Strasbourg on 26 June 2008;
- **The situation of Roma in Europe and relevant activities of the Council of Europe** (Rapporteur: Mr József Berényi, Slovak Republic, EPP/CD): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his fact-finding visit to Denmark on 28-29 May 2008;
- **Participation of members in conferences, meetings, seminars, etc.:** heard a report on the following event:
 - Colloquy: “Towards stronger implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights at national level” (Strasbourg, 9-10 June 2008): Mrs Marie-Louise Bemelmans-Videc (Netherlands, EPP/CD);
- **Appointment of representatives of the Committee:**
 - OSCE Supplementary Human Dimension meeting on Sustainable Policies for Roma and Sinti Integration (Vienna, 10-11 July 2008): Mr József Berényi (Slovak Republic, EPP/CD);
- **Proposed 42-day pre-charge detention in the United Kingdom:** decided to postpone the appointment of a rapporteur;
- **Motion for a resolution on human rights and the family division in England and Wales:** took note that this motion had been referred to it for information;

- **Protection of human rights in emergency situations** (*Rapporteur: Mr Holger Haibach, Germany, EPP/CD*): decided to organise a hearing on this subject, with the participation of experts, at its meeting in Paris on 9 September 2008;
- **Judicial corruption** (*Rapporteur: Mr Kimmo Sasi, Finland, EPP/CD*): decided to organise a hearing on this subject, with the participation of experts, at its meeting in Moscow on 11-12 November 2008;
- **Protection of "whistle-blowers"** (*Rapporteur: Mr Pieter Omtzigt, Netherlands, EPP/CD*): decided to organise a hearing on this subject, with the participation of experts, at its meeting in Moscow on 11-12 November 2008;
- **Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity** (*Rapporteur: Mr Andreas Gross, Switzerland, SOC*): decided to organise a hearing on this subject, with the participation of experts, at one of its meetings during the Assembly's September/October 2008 part-session;
- **Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights on behalf of Ukraine**: asked its Chairperson to write to the President of the President of the Assembly concerning the urgency of receiving the name of a third candidate;
- **Membership of sub-committees**: took note of the following change:
 - *Sub-Committee on Rights of Minorities*: Mr Ivan Popescu (Ukraine, SOC) to become a member;
- **Invitation from the Delegation of Romania**: thanked the Romanian Delegation for the invitation to meet in Romania in the first half of 2009;
- **Next meetings**:

Plenary Committee:

 - Paris, Tuesday 9 September 2008 at 9 h (Council of Europe Office)
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 4th part-session of 2008 (29 September - 3 October)
 - Moscow (Russian Federation), Monday 10 and Tuesday 11 November 2008

Sub-Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights:

 - Paris, Tuesday 9 September 2008, 16 h 30 – 18 h (Council of Europe Office) (*to be confirmed*)

The Sub-Committee on Human Rights (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) meeting in Strasbourg on 24 June 2008 at 14 h with Mr Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD) in the Chair, as regards:

- **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT)**: considered and approved its recommendations for the list of candidates to the CPT in respect of the Slovak Republic;
- **Invitation from the Delegation of Monaco**: thanked the Monegasque Delegation for the invitation to meet in Monaco on 10-11 March 2009 (*dates to be confirmed*);
- **Next meeting**: left it to the Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

The Sub-Committee on Rights of Minorities (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting in Strasbourg on 26 June 2008 at 9 h, with Mr József Berényi (Slovak Republic, EPP/CD) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Work programme:** considered a work programme;
- **The situation of Roma in Europe** (*Rapporteur on the situation of Roma in Europe and relevant activities of the Council of Europe: Mr József Berényi, Slovak Republic, EPP/CD*): held a hearing with the participation of:
 - Mr Michaël Guet, Head of Roma and Travellers Division
 - Mr Rudko Kawczynski, Chairperson of the European Roma and Travellers Forum
 - Mr Regis Brillat, Executive Secretary of the European Committee of Social Rights, Council of Europe
 - Mrs Sonia Parayre, Secretariat of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages
 - Mr Thomas Hammarberg, Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner;
- **Invitation from the Delegation of Monaco:** thanked the Monegasque Delegation for the invitation to meet in Monaco on 10-11 March 2009 (*dates to be confirmed*);
- **Next meeting:** left it to the Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

Andrew Drzemczewski, Günter Schirmer, Catherine Maffucci-Hugel, Isild Heurtin,
Jennifer Schuetze-Reymann

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