



Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights
Commission des questions juridiques et des droits de l'homme

SECRETARIAT

15 March 2011
Synopsis AS/Jur No 2011/02

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

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 8 March 2011

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Paris on 8 March 2011 with Mr Christos Pourgourides (Cyprus, EPP/CD) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Strengthening torture prevention mechanisms in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Jean-Charles Gardetto, Monaco, EPP/CD*): considered and approved a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation, with a view to presenting them at the Assembly's April 2011 part-session;
- **Establishment of an independent European committee to investigate serious allegations of gross and systematic violations of human rights** (*Rapporteur: Ms Marina Schuster, Germany, ALDE*): considered an information document; agreed to transmit the Rapporteur's proposals as a contribution from the Committee to the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly;
- **Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly** (*Rapporteur: Mr Jean-Claude Mignon, EPP/CD*): held an exchange of views and took note of the proposals in the report;
- **National sovereignty and statehood in contemporary international law: the need for clarification** (*Rapporteur: Ms Marina Schuster, Germany, ALDE*): decided to postpone consideration of this report until the Assembly's April 2011 part-session;
- **The declaration of principles of equality and activities of the Council of Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Boriss Cilevičs, Latvia, SOC*): held a hearing with the participation of:
 - Mr Frédéric Edel, Doctor of Law, Researcher, Ecole Nationale d'Administration, France
 - Mrs Dimitrina Petrova, Executive Director, The Equal Rights Trust, United Kingdom
 - Mr Michal Gondek, Legal Officer, European Commission, DG Justice, Belgium;
- **Appointment of rapporteurs**
 - **Human Rights and Family Courts**: appointed Mr Christopher Chope (United Kingdom, EDG) to replace Mr Paul Rowen (United Kingdom, ALDE), who has left the Assembly, and decided to request the Bureau for an extension of this reference in order to give the new Rapporteur sufficient time to prepare his report;
 - **Population transfer as a Human Rights violation**: appointed Mr Egidijus Vareikis (Lithuania, EPP/CD);

- **Request from the Parliament of Morocco for partner for democracy status within the Parliamentary Assembly (for opinion):** appointed Mr Arcadio Díaz Tejera (Spain, SOC);
 - **The situation of IDPs and returnees in the North Caucasus region (for opinion):** appointed Mr Dick Marty (Switzerland, ALDE);
 - **Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Palestinian National Council (for opinion):** appointed Ms Özlem Türköne (Turkey, EPP/CD);
- **Appointment of representatives of the Committee:** confirmed the appointment of Mr Boriss Cilevičs (Latvia, SOC) to represent the Committee at meetings of European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2011 and Mr György Frunda, (Romania, EPP/CD) as his alternate;
 - **The definition of political prisoners / The follow-up to the issue of political prisoners in Azerbaijan (Rapporteur : Mr Christoph Strässer, Germany, SOC):** took note of an information document and rejected a proposal to re-open the decision taken at the meeting in June 2010 regarding the motion for a resolution on the definition of political prisoners;
 - **The Rule of Law in Council of Europe member states: upholding the authority of the Parliamentary Assembly's recommendations (Rapporteur: Ms Marieluise Beck, Germany, ALDE) :** considered an introductory memorandum and authorised the Rapporteur to undertake fact-finding visits to France, Germany and the Russian Federation, subject to the availability of funds;
 - **Replies from the Committee of Ministers to recommendations emanating from the Committee:** postponed consideration of this point to its next meeting;
 - **Other business:**
 - **International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances:** decided to request the Bureau for an extension of this reference until 31 January 2012;
 - **Upcoming hearings :** decided to hold the following hearings on "National parliaments - guarantors of human rights in Europe" and on "Combating all forms of discrimination and intolerance based on religion" during the 2011 April part-session, and on « Basic standards for national minorities » and "Ensuring the viability of the European Court of Human Rights" during its meeting in Oslo, on 6-7 June 2011;
 - **Declassification of minutes :** decided to declassify the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2011 pertaining to the hearing on human rights and terrorism;
 - **Izmir High Level Conference on Future of ECtHR, 26-27 April 2011:** decided to propose to the Bureau that the Chairperson would appoint a Vice-Chairperson to represent him;
 - **Invitation of Mr Federico Mayor Zaragoza to the April 2011 part-session:** decided to request the Bureau to extend an invitation to Mr Mayor Zaragoza, President of the International Commission for the Abolition of the Death Penalty and former Director General of UNESCO, to address the Parliamentary Assembly's plenary session on 14 April 2011, on the occasion of the debate on "The death penalty in Council of Europe member and observer states: a violation of human rights".
 - **Next meetings:**
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 2nd part-session of 2011 (11-14 April)
 - Oslo, Norway, 6-7 June 2011
 - Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 3rd part-session of 2011 (20-24 June)
 - Paris, 7 September 2011 (Council of Europe Office)

The **Sub-Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights** (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting in Paris on 7 March 2011 at 9h, with Mr Klaas de Vries (Netherlands, SOC), in the Chair, as regards:

- **Hearings:** held hearings with the candidates to the European Court of Human Rights and adopted its recommendations for the attention of the Bureau of the Assembly with respect to the candidates from France, Norway and Switzerland.

Andrew Drzemczewski, Günter Schirmer, Agnieszka Szklanna

- cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
 - Director General, Directors and all staff of the Secretariat of the Assembly
 - Secretaries of National Delegations to the Assembly
 - Secretaries of Political Groups of the Assembly
 - Observers to the Assembly
 - Secretary General of the Congress
 - Secretary to the Committee of Ministers
 - Directors General
 - Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Organisational Development and Reform
 - 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