



SECRETARIAT

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23 May 2012

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

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 21 May 2012

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Paris on 21 May 2012 with Mr Christopher Chope (*United Kingdom, EDG*) in the Chair, as regards:

- **The situation of human rights defenders in Council of Europe member states** (*Rapporteur: Ms Mailis Reps, Estonia, ALDE*): considered and approved a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution with a view to presenting the report at a forthcoming Assembly part-session;
- **Keeping the political and criminal responsibility separate** (*Rapporteur: Mr Pieter Omtzigt, Netherlands, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his recent fact-finding visit to Iceland. Held a hearing with the participation of:
Professor Helmut Satzger (University of Munich, Germany)
Professor Luc Verhey, State Councillor (University of Leiden, Netherlands);
- **Human rights and family courts** (*Rapporteur: Mr Christopher Chope, United Kingdom, EDG*): held a hearing under the chairmanship of Ms Marina Schuster, First Vice-Chairperson (Germany, ALDE) with the participation of:
Professor Judith Masson, (Professor of Socio-legal Studies, University of Bristol Law School, United Kingdom)
Judge Daniel Pical (Chairman of the European Section of the International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates, Versailles Appeal Court, France);
- **Revisiting the issue of political prisoners** (*Rapporteur: Mr Christoph Strässer, Germany, SOC*): heard statements by Mr Arcadio Diaz Tejera (Spain, SOC) and the Rapporteur, Mr Christoph Strässer (Germany, SOC), voted to reverse its earlier decision to merge the two motions on “The follow up to the issue of political prisoners in Azerbaijan” (Doc. 11468) and “The definition of political prisoners” (Doc. 11922) and invited Mr Strässer, the Rapporteur, to submit these two reports within the established deadline;
- **Appointment of rapporteurs**
 - Witness protection as an indispensable tool in the fight against organised crime and terrorism in Europe: appointed Mr Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD);
 - The future of the European Court of Human Rights and the Brighton Declaration: appointed Mr Yves Pozzo di Borgo (France, EPP/CD);
- **Other business**
 - Agreed to the participation of Mr Jean-Pierre Michel (France, SOC) in the conference organised by the Council of Europe on training legal professionals regarding the European Convention on Human Rights, Strasbourg, 5-6 June 2012, subject to the availability of funds;
 - Agreed to the proposal by Mr Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE), Rapporteur on “Strengthening the institution of Ombudsman in Europe” to organise an exchange of views with the European

Ombudsman during the June meeting;

- Agreed to the proposal by Mrs Marieluise Beck (Germany, ALDE), Rapporteur on “Threats to the Rule of Law in Council of Europe member states – upholding the Assembly’s authority” to hold a hearing with Ms Morshchakova, former judge at the Russian Federation’s Constitutional Court at a future Committee meeting;

– **Next meetings**

Plenary Committee:

- Strasbourg, during the Assembly’s 3rd part session of 2012 (25-29 June 2012)
- Paris, 6 September 2012, 9am - 5.30pm (Council of Europe Office)
- Strasbourg, during the Assembly’s 4th part session of 2012 (1-5 October 2012)
- Paris, 12 November 2012, 9am - 5.30pm (Council of Europe Office)(to be confirmed)
- Paris, 11 December 2012, 9am - 5.30pm (Council of Europe Office)(to be confirmed)

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

- Paris, 13-15 June 2012 (Council of Europe Office).

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 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