



SECRETARIAT

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7 March 2014

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

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 3 March 2014

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Paris on 3 March 2014 with Mr James Clappison (*United Kingdom, EDG*) in the Chair, as regards:

- **The protection of minors against excesses of sects** (*Rapporteur: Mr Rudy Salles, France, EPP/CD*): considered a draft report and adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation, and agreed to change the title of the report as indicated above.
- **European institutions and human rights in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Michael McNamara, Ireland, SOC*): held a hearing with the participation of:
Mr Jean-Claude Trichet, Honorary Governor of the Bank of France, Paris, former President of the European Central Bank,
Mr Morten Kjaerum, Director, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), Vienna;
- **The right to Internet access** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Jordi Xuclà, Spain, ALDE*): considered a report tabled by the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media and approved the Committee's opinion including three amendments to the draft resolution;
- **Drones and targeted killings: the need to uphold human rights** (*Rapporteur: Mr Arcadio Díaz Tejera, Spain, SOC*): considered an introductory memorandum and agreed to hold a hearing with three experts at one of its forthcoming meetings;
- **Witness protection as an indispensable tool in the fight against organised crime and terrorism in Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Arcadio Díaz Tejera, Spain, SOC*): considered an introductory memorandum and agreed to hold a hearing with two or three experts during its meeting in Helsinki (26-27 May 2014) and to send a questionnaire to national parliamentary delegations of all Council of Europe member states;
- **Urgent need to deal with new failures to co-operate with the European Court of Human Rights** (*Rapporteur: Mr Kimmo Sasi, Finland, EPP/CD*): took note of a statement by the Rapporteur indicating that so far, only the Ukrainian delegation had responded to his invitation addressed to six delegations to provide additional explanation.
- **Appointment of rapporteurs:**
 - i) *Judicial Corruption: urgent need to implement the Assembly's proposals* (for report): appointed Mr Kimmo Sasi, Finland, EPP/CD;
 - ii) *Request for partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic* (for opinion, following the departure of Mr Egidijus Vareikis, Lithuania, EPP/CD, from the Committee): appointed Mr Pedro Agramunt, Spain, EPP/CD (Rapporteur for the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy: Mr Andreas Gross Switzerland, SOC);

- iii) *Parliamentary contribution to solving the Western Sahara conflict* (for opinion, following the departure of Mr Egidijus Vareikis, Lithuania, EPP/CD, from the Committee): appointed Ms Teresa Bertuzzi, Italy, SOC
(Rapporteur for the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy: Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier, Switzerland, SOC);
- **Replies from the Committee of Ministers to recommendations emanating from the Committee:** took note of the reply and of the Rapporteur’s comments on it to the following recommendation: “Promoting alternatives to imprisonment”;
- **Mass Surveillance / Improving Whistleblower protection** (*Rapporteur: Mr Pieter Omtzigt, Netherlands, EPP/CD*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, the Committee took note of the Rapporteur’s update of the preparation of the hearings foreseen for the April 2014 part-session presented by the Chair;
- **Reform of the Assembly: two-year review. Proposal to transform the Sub-Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights into a permanent committee:** took note of a letter sent to Committee Chairs by the Rapporteur of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, Ms Liliana Palihovici (Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD), and agreed with the proposal to transform the Sub-Committee into a permanent committee;
- **Other business**
 - **Situation in Ukraine:** issued a statement condemning the violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine by armed forces of the Russian Federation over the weekend of 1st and 2nd March 2014, indicating that it believed there had been a serious violation of the basic principles of the Council of Europe, as stipulated in Article 3 of, and the preamble to, the Statute, and called on the Assembly to send a fact-finding mission to Crimea as soon as possible; decided to invite the Venice Commission to assess the legitimacy of certain decisions of the Verkhovna Rada on 21 and 24 February 2014 [*secretariat note: this decision is out of order for the reasons laid out in the letter from the Secretary General of the Assembly to the Chairman of the Committee dated 6 March 2014 transmitted to all members at the Chairman’s request on 7 March 2014*].
 - **Threats to the Rule of Law in Council of Europe member states: asserting the Parliamentary Assembly’s authority** (*Rapporteur: Ms Marieluise Beck, Germany, ALDE*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, agreed, upon her request, to ask the Bureau for a further extension of her mandate until the end of 2014 and to invite Yuriy Lutsenko, former Minister of Interior of Ukraine, for an exchange of views at a future meeting after the April part-session of the Assembly;
 - **Seminar on the role of national parliaments in the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights:** heard feedback by Mr Marias (Greece, EDG) and the Secretariat on the seminar held in Warsaw on 13 February 2014;
- **Next meetings:** took note of the invitation from the Spanish delegation to hold a 2-day meeting in Madrid in October/ November 2014 (subject to Bureau authorisation). To this end, and to stay within budgetary constraints, decided to cancel the meeting foreseen on 2 September 2014 in Paris and to replace the meeting on 4 November 2014 in Paris with the proposed meeting in Madrid (date to be confirmed);

Plenary Committee:

- Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 2nd part-session of 2014 (7-11 April 2014)
- Helsinki, Finland, 26-27 May 2014 (Finnish Parliament): the meeting will start in the afternoon of 26.05.2014
- Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 3rd part-session of 2014 (23-27 June 2014)
- Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 4th part-session of 2014 (29 September – 3 October 2014)
- Madrid, October / November 2014 (date to be confirmed)
- Paris, 10 December 2014 (Council of Europe Office) tbc

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

- Strasbourg, 6 April 2014 (tbc)

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