



SECRETARIAT

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27 April 2018

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

Synopsis of the meeting held in Strasbourg on 23-26 April 2018

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Strasbourg from 23 to 26 April 2018 with Mr Frank Schwabe (Germany, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:

- on Monday 23 April 2018 at 2pm,
 - **Appointment of a Rapporteur – debate under urgent procedure on “Copenhagen Declaration, appreciation and follow-up”**: appointed Ms Thorhildur Sunna Æversdóttir (Iceland, SOC) and heard from her a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - **The status of journalists in Europe** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Ms Thorhildur Sunna Æversdóttir, Iceland, SOC*) (*Rapporteur for the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media: Ms Elvira Drobinski-Weiss, Germany, SOC*): considered a report tabled by the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media and considered and approved the Committee’s opinion;
 - **Appointment of rapporteurs:**
 - For report:**
 - Daphne Caruana Galizia’s assassination and the rule of law, in Malta and beyond: ensuring that the whole truth emerges*: appointed Mr Pieter Omtzigt (Netherlands, EPP/CD) and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - Improving the protection of whistleblowers all over Europe*: appointed Mr Sylvain Waserman (France, ALDE) and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - **Request for authorisation for fact-finding visits for the following reports**: authorised Mr Mart van de Ven (Netherlands, ALDE), Rapporteur for “New challenges in the fight against organised crime and money laundering – the need to improve international co-operation” and Lord Donald Anderson (United Kingdom, SOC), Rapporteur for “Sergei Magnitsky and beyond – fighting impunity by targeted sanctions” to carry out a fact-finding visits, both to London, United Kingdom, on 14 May 2018, subject to the availability of funds;
 - **Motion referred to the Committee for information**: took note of the motion on “So-called “tax optimisation” and policy, two incompatible concepts” referred to the Committee for information;
 - on Tuesday 24 April 2018 at 8.30am,
 - **Debate under urgent procedure “Copenhagen Declaration, appreciation and follow-up”** (*Rapporteur: Ms Thorhildur Sunna Æversdóttir, Iceland, SOC*): considered a draft report and adopted a draft recommendation;

- **State of emergency: proportionality issues concerning derogations under Article 15 of the European Convention on Human Rights** (*Rapporteur: Mr Raphaël Comte, Switzerland, ALDE*): took position on 19 amendments to the draft resolution;
- **Appointment of a Rapporteur for opinion on the report for debate under urgent procedure on “Follow-up to the report of the Independent Investigation Body on the allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly”**: appointed Ms Olena Sotnyk (Ukraine, ALDE) and heard from her a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
- **The continuing need to restore human rights and the rule of law in the North Caucasus region**, (*Rapporteur: Frank Schwabe Germany, SOC*): in anticipation of the joint hearing with the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination on “*Alleged extreme discrimination and crimes against LGBTI people in the Chechen Republic (Russian Federation)*”, agreed to share the rapporteur’s introductory memorandum with members of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination and to open the hearing to the public;
- **The implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights – 10th report** (*Rapporteur: Mr Evangelos Venizelos, Greece, SOC*): held a hearing with the participation of Mr Christos Giakoumopoulos, Director General of Human Rights and Rule of Law of the Council of Europe, Mr Abel de Campos, Section Registrar, Registry of the Court of Human Rights, and Mr Christos Giannopoulos, Doctor of Public Law, Lecturer at the University of Strasbourg, France;
- **on Tuesday 24 April 2018 at 2.30pm,**
- **Alleged extreme discrimination and crimes against LGBTI people in the Chechen Republic (Russian Federation)**: held a joint hearing with the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination with the participation of Mr Igor Kochetkov, Chairperson of the Russian LGBT Network, Saint Petersburg, and Ms Tanya Lokshina, Russia Programme Director, Human Rights Watch, Moscow, Russian Federation, in the framework of the preparation of the reports on “*Alleged extreme discrimination and crimes against LGBTI people in the Chechen Republic (Russian Federation)*” (*Rapporteur of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination: Mr Piet de Bruyn, Belgium, NR*), and “*The continuing need to restore human rights and the rule of law in the North Caucasus region*” (*Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights: Mr Frank Schwabe, Germany, SOC*);
- **Wednesday 25 April 2018 at 2pm,**
- **Opinion on the report under urgent procedure on the “Follow-up to the report of the Independent Investigation Body on the allegations of corruption within the Parliamentary Assembly”** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Ms Olena Sotnyk, Ukraine, ALDE*), (*Rapporteur for the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs: Ms Petra De Sutter, Belgium, SOC*): considered a report tabled by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and considered and approved the Committee’s opinion;
- **Protecting human rights defenders in Council of Europe member States** (*Rapporteur: Mr Egidijus Vareikis, Lithuania, EPP/CD*): held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr Michel Forst, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders (open to the public);
- **Interference in democratic elections**: discussed a possible motion to be presented on behalf of the Committee then agreed to request the Bureau to be seized for an opinion on the report under preparation by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy on “Democracy hacked? How to respond?”;
- **on Thursday 26 April 2018 at 8.45am,**
- **Debate under urgent procedure “Copenhagen Declaration, appreciation and follow-up”** (*Rapporteur: Ms Thorhildur Sunna Eversdóttir, Iceland, SOC*): took note that no amendments had been tabled to the draft recommendation;
- **Fighting organised crime by facilitating the confiscation of illegal assets** (*Rapporteur: Mr Mart van de Ven, Netherlands, ALDE*): took note that no amendments had been tabled to the draft resolution;

- **Legal challenges related to the hybrid war and human rights obligations** (*Rapporteur: Mr Boriss Cilevičs, Latvia, SOC*): took position on 6 amendments to the draft resolution and on 3 amendments to the draft recommendation;
- **Report of the Sub-Committee on the Implementation of the European Court of Human Rights**: took note of the report by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee (Ms Eka Beselia, Georgia, SOC) on the meeting held in Strasbourg on Thursday 26th April 2018;
- **Handbook for parliamentarians: National parliaments as guarantors of human rights in Europe**: authorised the publication of the handbook following its consideration and approval by the Sub-Committee on the Implementation of the European Court of Human Rights;
- **Compatibility of Sharia law with the European Convention on Human Rights: can States Parties to the Convention be signatories of the “Cairo Declaration”?** (*Rapporteur: Mr Antonio Gutiérrez, Spain, SOC*): in the absence of the rapporteur, agreed to his request to ask the Bureau for an extension of the reference until 31 December 2018 and otherwise to postpone this item;
- **Human rights situation in the occupied regions of Georgia** (*Rapporteur: Mr Pierre-Alain Fridez, Switzerland, SOC*): in the absence of the Rapporteur agreed to his request to carry out a fact-finding visit to Georgia and to hold a hearing at a future meeting with experts, both subject to the availability of funds;
- **With Ms Eka Beselia (Georgia, SOC)**, Chairperson of the Sub-committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, in the Chair (in the absence of the Vice-Chairpersons) as regards:
 - **The continuing need to restore human rights and the rule of law in the North Caucasus region** (*Rapporteur: Mr Frank Schwabe, Germany, SOC*): considered an introductory memorandum;
 - **Co-operation with United Nations human rights mechanisms – a challenge for the Council of Europe and its member States** (*Rapporteur: Mr Frank Schwabe, Germany, SOC*): considered an introductory memorandum;
- **With Mr Frank Schwabe (Germany, SOC)** in the Chair, as regards:
 - **How can inappropriate restrictions to NGO activities in Europe be prevented?** (*Rapporteur: Mr Yves Cruchten, Luxembourg, SOC*): in the absence of the rapporteur, took note of the opinion of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) on the Romanian draft law 140/2017, amending Law 26/2000 on Associations and Foundations (Opinion No. 914/2017);
 - **Participation of members in conferences, meetings, seminars etc**: heard a brief report by Mr Georgii Logvynskyi (Ukraine, EPP/CD) on the 79th plenary meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) held in Strasbourg on 19-23 March 2018;
- **Other business**:
 - **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize**: took note of the approaching deadline for submission of nominations on 30 April 2018 and of the nomination procedure on the [website](#);
 - **Meeting in Reykjavik on 22-23 May 2018**: took note of the deadline of 1 May by which members should inform the secretariat of interpretation requirements, in line with current budgetary procedures;
 - **End of year meetings**: in accordance with AS/Bur (2018) 04, agreed to cancel the Committee’s meeting scheduled for 12 November 2018; confirmed its meeting to be held in Paris on 10 September 2018;

- **Next meetings:** took note of the forthcoming meetings as follows:

Plenary Committee:

- Reykjavik, Iceland, 22-23 May 2018
- Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 3rd part-session of 2018 (25-29 June 2018)
- Paris, 10 September 2018 (Council of Europe Office)
- Strasbourg, during the Assembly's 4th part-session of 2018 (8-12 October 2018)
- Paris, 13 December 2018 (Council of Europe Office).

The Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting in Strasbourg on Thursday 26 April 2018 at 8.30am, with Ms Eka Beselia (Georgia, SOC) in the Chair as regards:

- **Election of the Vice-Chairperson of the Sub-Committee:** elected Mr Leonid Yemets (Ukraine, EPP/CD) Vice-Chairperson by acclamation;
- **Handbook for parliamentarians: National parliaments as guarantors of human rights in Europe:** considered and approved the handbook;
- **Next meeting:** during the June part-session.

Günter Schirmer, David Milner, Agnieszka Szklanna

Copy to:

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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