

Parliamentary **Assembly** **Assemblée** parlementaire



FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly

Synopsis N° 2003 / 104

15 September 2003

The Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Paris on 11 September 2003, under the chairmanship of Mr Jakič (Slovenia, LDR):

- observed one minute of silence as a mark of respect for Mrs Anne Lindh, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sweden who succumbed to her injuries following an armed attack;
- took note of a written communication by Mr Schwimmer, Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
- heard a brief statement by its Chairman on the meeting between the chairs of committees with the President of the Assembly, on 26 June 2003, concerning, in particular, the role of the committees in the external relations of the Assembly;

As regards:

- *Request for Council of Europe membership: Principality of Monaco (Rapporteur: Mr Slutsky, Russia, SOC):* was informed about the decision by the Bureau not to include this question on the draft agenda of the September 2003 part-session, which was taken at the request of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights; considered, amended and approved, provisionally, a preliminary draft Opinion;
- *Request for an opinion by the Committee of Ministers on relations between the Council of Europe and non-governmental organisations (Rapporteur: Mr Elo, Finland, SOC):* considered, amended and adopted a draft Opinion;
- *The political situation in the Chechen Republic: measures to increase democratic stability in accordance with Council of Europe standards (Rapporteur: Mr Gross, Switzerland, SOC):* was informed about the discussion in the Bureau of the Assembly on the invitation to monitor the presidential elections in the Chechen Republic (5 October 2003); held an exchange of views based on a report by the Rapporteur following his visit to Russia and was favourable to the proposal to hold a hearing during the September 2003 part-session;

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cc Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly
 Director General and staff of the Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly
 Secretaries of National Delegations to the Assembly
 Secretaries of Political Groups of the Assembly
 Special Guests and Observers to the Assembly
 Directors General
 Secretary of the Committee of Ministers
 Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General
 Director of Communication and Research
 Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe

- *Council of Europe presence in Northern Ireland (Rapporteur: Mr Ouzky, Czech Republic, EDG):* took note of a statement by the Rapporteur and invited him to present, at its next meeting, a timetable, taking into consideration the elections scheduled for November 2003 in Northern Ireland, the expiry date of the reference (January 2004), and in co-ordination with the delegations of the United Kingdom and Ireland to the Assembly;
- *Relations between Europe and the United States (Rapporteur: Mr Azzolini, Italy, EPP-CD):* heard a statement by the Rapporteur, held an exchange of views on the possible themes for the colloquy on *Transatlantic dialogue*, and took note of the interest shown by the delegation of the United Kingdom to organise the colloquy in that country, and judged that the first half of 2004 would be a realistic timeframe;
- *Future of democracy: strengthening democratic institutions (Rapporteur: Mr Wielowieyski, Poland, EPP-CD):* accepted to remove the draft Order following objections by the President of the Assembly, as regards its conformity with the Rules of Procedure;
- *Authorisations:*
 - . authorised Mrs de Zulueta (Italy, SOC) to participate, in the framework of the preparation of her report on *Strengthening of the United Nations*, in a parliamentary colloquy to be organised by the IPU during the General Assembly of the United Nations (New York, 27 October 2003, subject to authorisation by the Bureau);
- took note of an invitation from the Chair of the delegation of Slovenia to hold a meeting of the Committee in 2004 in Slovenia;
- *Dates and places of next meetings:*
 - . *Strasbourg, during the September 2003 part-session, possibly including Friday, 26 September (Morning);*
 - . *Paris, 11 December 2003;*
 - . *Paris, 8 January 2004.*

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The Sub-Committee on Strengthening Democratic Institutions (of the Political Affairs Committee), meeting in Paris on 11 September 2003, under the chairmanship of Mr Wielowieyski (Poland, EPP-CD):

- held an exchange of views on *Political parties in a democracy governed by the rule of law* with Mr Hans Heinrich Vogel, Professor of Public Law at the University of Lund, member of the Sub-Commission on Democratic Institutions of the Venice Commission;
- held a discussion on national approaches to strengthening participatory mechanisms in a democracy;
- left it to its Chairman to convene the next meeting.

Barış Perin, Pavel Chevtchenko, Rüdiger Dossow