



Political Affairs Committee

**FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE
POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly**

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9 September 2010

The Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Belgrade on 6-7 September 2010, with Mr von Sydow (Sweden, SOC) and Mr Wilshire (United Kingdom, EDG) in the Chair:

- heard a welcome address by Ms Slavica Đukić-Dejanović, Speaker of the National Assembly of Serbia, and held an exchange of views with Mr Božidar Đelić, Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Goran Bogdanović, Minister for Kosovo-Metohija, Mr Mirko Stefanović, State Secretary, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and Mr Dragoljub Mićunović, Chairperson of the Serbian Delegation to the Assembly;
- upon the proposal by several members, held an exchange of views on the recent rise of national security discourse in Europe and the way it had been affecting the Roma population, and decided to request that a debate be held under urgent procedure at the next part-session of the Assembly (4-8 October 2010) on the following topic:

“Recent rise of national security discourse in Europe: the case of Roma”

as regards:

- **Re-engaging in the parliamentary dialogue with the United States** (*Rapporteur: Mr Lindblad, Sweden, EPP/CD*): considered and approved a report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;
- **Reconciliation and political dialogue between the countries of the former Yugoslavia** (*Rapporteur: Mr Marcenaro, Italy, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on the basis of his introductory memorandum, decided to declassify it and, in the framework of the preparation of the report, held a **Hearing on peace-building in the countries of former Yugoslavia** (with Mr Wilshire in the Chair, as Chairman of the Sub-Committee on conflict prevention through dialogue and reconciliation) with the participation of:
 - Ms Sonia Licht, President of the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence, Council of Europe Network of Schools of Political Studies;
 - Mr Miljenko Dorić (Croatia, ALDE), Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights on *The obligation of member states of the Council of Europe to co-operate in prosecution of war crimes*;
 - Ms Natasa Kandic, Director of the Humanitarian Law Center, Belgrade;
 - Ms Vesna Teršelič, Director of Documenta-Centre for Dealing with the Past, Zagreb;

- **Expansion of democracy by lowering the voting age to 16** (*Rapporteur: Mr Aligrudić, Serbia, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on the basis of an outline for report and held an exchange of views;
- **Situation in the Middle East**: heard a statement by Mr de Puig, Chairman of the Sub-committee on the Middle East, and held an exchange of views with Mr Al-Salhi and Mr Kokaly, members of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and Mrs Frankel, Ambassador of Israel, and took note that the Sub-committee on the Middle East will hold a meeting during the next part-session (4-8 October 2010);
- **Measures to improve the democratic character of elections in the Council of Europe member states** (*Rapporteur: Mr Gardetto, Monaco, EPP/CD*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, took note that he had submitted an outline for report;
- **Situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Mrs Hurskainen, Finland, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on her visit to Minsk (22-25 August 2010), held an exchange of views on the latest developments in that country, took note of a press statement made by the Rapporteur in connection with the death of Mr Oleg Bebenin, co-founder of the *Charter 97* website in Belarus, agreed to her proposal to invite to a forthcoming meeting representatives of the Parliament, of the extra-parliamentary opposition and of the independent media from Belarus to address the Committee, as well as to invite a representative of the Venice Commission to inform the Committee on the amendments to the Belorussian electoral legislation;
- paid tribute to the former Head of the Secretariat of the Committee, Mr Bariş Perin, who had passed away on 10 July 2010.

- **Next meetings**
 - . 4th part-session 2010 (4-8 October 2010), Strasbourg
 - . 18 November 2010, Paris

Despina Chatzivassiliou, Pavel Chevtchenko, Sonia Sirtori-Milner, Siobhan Lloyd

- 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 Organisation Developments 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