



Political Affairs Committee

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

AS/PoI/CB (2011) 03

18 April 2011

The Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Strasbourg from 11 to 14 April 2011, with Mr von Sydow (Sweden, SOC) in the Chair:

as regards:

- **The religious dimension of intercultural dialogue** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Toshev, Bulgaria, EPP/CD*): considered and approved a draft opinion, including 6 amendments to the draft recommendation prepared by the Committee on Culture, Science and Education;
- **Iran's nuclear programme: the need for an effective international response** (*Rapporteur: Mr Iwiński, Poland, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and approved a report for information with a view to presenting it to the Standing Committee meeting in Kyiv (27 May 2011);
- **Situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Ms Hurskainen, Finland, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on the basis of an information note on developments following the adoption of Resolution 1790 (2011) and decided to declassify it; held an exchange of views with the participation of Dr Elena Tonkacheva, Human Rights Defender, Foundation for legal technologies development, Mr Aliaksandr Bialiatki, President of the Human Rights Centre (HRC) "Viasna", Vice-President of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), Mr Andrey Yurov, Head of the International Observation Mission of the Committee on International Control over the situation with human rights in Belarus (CICHR-Belarus), and Mr Michael Hamilton, Chair of the group of experts from OSCE countries on freedom of assembly and police response measures of the CICHR-Belarus;
- **Request for partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of Morocco** (*Rapporteur: Mr Volontè, Italy, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and held an exchange of views on the basis of a preliminary draft memorandum;
- **Request for partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Palestinian National Council** (*Rapporteur: Mr Kox, Netherlands, UEL*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on the basis of an information note on his visit to the region (21-26 March 2011), held an exchange of views and proposed that Mr Abbas, President of the Palestinian Authority, be invited to address the Assembly at its June 2011 part-session;
- **The impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Council of Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mrs Lundgren, Sweden, ALDE*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on her visits to Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg (March-April 2011), held an exchange of views and proposed that Mr Barroso, President of the European Commission, be invited to address the Assembly at its October 2011 part-session;

- **Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly:** held an exchange of views and agreed to submit a contribution to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Assembly on the Reform of the Assembly;
- **Measures to improve the democratic character of elections in the Council of Europe member states** (*Rapporteur: Mr Gardetto, Monaco, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and agreed to organise a hearing with the participation of representatives of the Venice Commission, the European Court of Human Rights and the ODIHR;
- **Future work:**
 - a) - appointed for reports:

Mr Jean-Charles Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur on *Co-operation between the Council of Europe and emerging democracies in the Arab world*

Mr Latchezar Toshev (Bulgaria, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur on *Living together in 21st century Europe: follow-up to the Eminent persons report*

 - heard from them a declaration on the absence of conflict of interest;
 - decided to postpone to its next meeting the appointment of rapporteurs for opinion on the followings reports:
 - . *The portrayal of migrants and refugees during election campaigns* (AS/Mig Rapporteur: Mrs Dumery, Belgium, NR)
 - . *The situation of Roma in Europe: movement and migration* (AS/Mig Rapporteur: Mrs Groth, Germany, UEL);
 - b) Activities of the sub-committees and the ad hoc sub-committee on the Forum for the future of democracy:
 - heard a statement by Mr Slutsky, Chair of the Sub-Committee on External Relations and agreed that the Sub-Committee would participate in the joint meeting with partner Committees from the Parliamentary Assemblies from the CIS and OSCE, on 16 May 2011 in St Petersburg, subject to the authorisation of the Bureau.
 - heard a statement by Ms Hurskainen, Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on conflict prevention through dialogue and reconciliation, agreed to her proposal to organise, during the November 2011 meeting in Paris, an exchange of views on the experience of the peace process in Northern Ireland, to invite to it an international expert, Mr Neil Jarman, Director of the Institute for Conflict Research in Belfast, and to consider inviting also politicians involved in the peace process in Northern Ireland;
 - was informed that the ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Forum for the future of democracy would be part of the newly established ad hoc Committee of the Bureau to participate in the Forum to be held in Cyprus (13-14 October 2011);
 - c) September 2011 meeting of the Committee (Caserta, Italy):
 - accepted the invitation by the Italian delegation to hold its meeting on 6 September 2011 in Caserta, subject to the authorisation of the Bureau;

- d) Participation of members in conferences, meetings, seminars, etc.
 - . heard an oral report by Ms Brasseur (Luxembourg, ALDE) on her participation in the plenary meeting of the Venice Commission (Venice, 25-26 March 2011) ;

- e) Changes in the composition of sub-committees

- approved the following changes:

Sub-Committee on the Middle East:

Mr Vrettos (Greece), member, and Mr Meimarakis, alternate

Sub-Committee on external relations

Mr Hajiyev (Azerbaijan) as alternate of Mr Seyidov

Mr Kox (Netherlands) as alternate of Mr Franken

Sub-Committee on conflict prevention through dialogue and reconciliation

Mr Seyidov (Azerbaijan) as member

- **Follow-up by the Committee of Ministers to Assembly texts presented by the Political Affairs Committee:**

- decided to postpone this item to its next meeting.

- **Next meetings**

- . 16 May 2011, St-Petersburg (Russian Federation) - Sub-Committee on External Relations;
- . 30 May afternoon and 31 May 2011, Paris – Plenary Committee;
- . 3rd part-session 2011 (20-24 June 2011), Strasbourg;
- . 6 September 2011, Caserta (Italy) – Plenary Committee

The sub-committee on external relations of the Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Strasbourg on 14 April 2011, with Mr Slutsky (Russian Federation, SOC), in the Chair:

- *elected* Mr Franken (Netherlands, EPP/CD) as Vice-Chair;
- discussed issues for the agenda of the joint meeting to be held in St Petersburg on 16 May 2011, and decided to suggest the following items:

. Political transformations in the Arab world;

. Need to step up international co-operation to fight drug traffic

- ***Date and place of the next meeting:*** St Petersburg, Russian Federation, 16 May 2011.

The sub-committee on the Middle East of the Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Strasbourg on 14 April 2011, with Mr Tekelioğlu (Turkey, EPP/CD) in the Chair:

- *elected* Mr Titus Corlătean (Romania, SOC) as Chair;
- ***Date and place of the next meeting:*** decided to hold its next meeting in Strasbourg, during the June 2011 part-session of the Assembly.

Despina Chatzivassiliou, João Ary, Pavel Chevtchenko, Silvia Arzilli, Plamen Nikolov