



## Political Affairs Committee

### Secretariat

#### FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

**AS/Pol/CB (2011) 07**

10 October 2011

**The Political Affairs Committee**, meeting in Strasbourg on 3-6 October 2011, with Mr von Sydow (Sweden, SOC), Mr Kosachev (Russia, EDG), Lord Tomlinson (United Kingdom, SOC) and Lord Anderson (United Kingdom, SOC) in the Chair:

*as regards:*

**The political situation in the Balkans** : appointed Mr von Sydow as Rapporteur for the debate under urgent procedure; considered and approved a report, adopted a draft resolution and subsequently took position on the amendments tabled;

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

- heard statements by Mr Gardetto and Mr Vrettos on their mission to Egypt (23-26 September 2011);
- approved an addendum to the report including amendments to the draft resolution and subsequently took position on the amendments tabled to the draft resolution;
- held an exchange of views with representatives of political parties from Egypt and notably Mr Amr Hassan Helmy from El-Wafd party and Mr Mohamed Morsy from the Coalition of the youth of the revolution, as well as with Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the European Commission for Democracy by Law (Venice Commission);

**Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Palestinian National Council** (*Rapporteur: Mr Kox, Netherlands, UEL*): took position on the amendments tabled to the draft resolution;

**The impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Council of Europe** (*Rapporteur: Ms Lundgren, Sweden, ALDE*): took position on the amendments tabled to the draft resolution and to the draft recommendation;

**Human rights and the fight against terrorism** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Corlăţean, Romania, SOC*): considered and approved an opinion, including amendments to be tabled;

**Reaffirming the universal nature of human rights** (*Rapporteur: Mr Badré, France, ALDE*): considered an introductory memorandum and heard a statement by the Rapporteur;

**The situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Herkel, Estonia, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and endorsed his intention to visit Belarus, and, on that occasion, to meet political prisoners;

**Proposals for a follow-up to PACE Recommendation 1975 (2011) adopted on 22 June 2011 on *Living together in 21st-century Europe: follow-up to the report of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Council of Europe***: heard a statement by the Chairman, held an exchange of views on a document prepared by the Secretariat upon instructions of the Chairman, asked the Secretariat to revise it in the light of the discussion, with a view to transmission to the Bureau;

**Follow-up to Resolution 1819 (2011) on The situation in Tunisia:** held an exchange of views on the forthcoming election for a Constituent National Assembly in Tunisia with the participation of two journalists; Mr Youssef Lahlali (Libération Maroc) and Mr Khalid el Harrak (Maghreb Press Agency);

**Replies given by the Committee of Ministers to recommendations stemming from the Committee:** took note of the replies to Recommendation 1954 (2011) and to Recommendation 1957 (2011);

**Appointment of rapporteurs:**

- **The erosion of confidence in democracy and possible responses:** agreed that the issues raised in this motion should be addressed together with those raised in the motion on **How much and what kind of State is needed in a democratic and just society?** and confirmed Mr Gross (*Switzerland, SOC*) as Rapporteur for this report, it being understood that the title would be reviewed accordingly;
- **The situation in Kosovo:** appointed Mr von Sydow (*Sweden, SOC*) as Rapporteur, heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest and authorised him to carry out a fact-finding visit in November;
- **took note of the candidatures** for the following reports, to be appointed at its next meeting:
  - The promotion of active citizenship in Europe,
  - Counteraction to manifestations of neo-nazism and xenophobia,
  - New parliamentary effort to create a stability pact in the Caucasus,
  - The rise of populist movements in Europe and its dangers for democracy;

**Conference on the *Role of women and democratic changes in the countries of the Southern shore of the Mediterranean*,** organised by the Council of Europe North-South Centre (Rome, 24 and 25 October 2011): appointed Ms Brasseur (*Luxemburg, ALDE*) and Ms Memecan (*Turkey, ALDE*) as representatives to participate in the ad hoc Committee of the Bureau;

**Proposals for future action by:**

**How much and what kind of state is needed in a democratic and just society ?** (*Rapporteur: Mr Gross, Switzerland, SOC*): heard from the Rapporteur that he intended to organise a hearing of political scientists in November or in December;

**The need for a code of good practice in the field of funding of electoral campaigns,** (*Rapporteur: Mr Harutyunyan, Armenia, EDG*): heard a statement and took note of a memorandum by the Rapporteur; agreed with him that a new code of good practice was not necessary and decided to inform the Bureau accordingly;

**Measures to improve the democratic character of elections in Council of Europe member states** (*Rapporteur: Mr Gardetto, Monaco, EPP/CD*): heard from the Rapporteur that he intended to organise a round table with the participation of the Venice Commission, the Human Rights Commissioner, the European Court of Human Rights, the OSCE/ODIHR and a number of experts in election matters;

**Democracy and the limitation of mandates** (*Rapporteur: Mr Hancock, United Kingdom, ALDE*): agreed to the proposal by the Rapporteur to seek the advice of the Venice Commission on this issue;

**Changes in the composition of the sub-committees:** appointed the following:

Sub-committee on conflict prevention through dialogue and reconciliation:

- Ms Susanna Huovinen (Finland) as member,
- Mr Saša Magazinović (Bosnia-Herzegovina) as member,
- Mr Deniz Baykal (Turkey) as member,

Sub-Committee on the Middle East:

- Mr Francisco Assis (Portugal) as alternate (replacing Mr Vera Jardim),
- Mr Terry Leyden (Ireland) as member (replacing Mr Fahey),
- Mr Terence Flanagan (Ireland) as alternate (replacing Mr O'Keeffe),
- Ms Memecan (Turkey) as member,

Sub-Committee on external relations:

- Mr Francisco Assis (Portugal) as member (replacing Mr Vera Jardim),
- Mr Zingeris (Lithuania) and Mr Wadephul (Germany), who were on the waiting list, as members,
- Mr Terence Flanagan (Ireland), Mr Terry Leyden (Ireland), Mr Şaban Dişli (Turkey) and Mr Deniz Baykal (Turkey) will be put on the waiting list;

**Authorisations by the Committee:** agreed to the request by Mr Toshev (Bulgaria, EPP/CD) to attend a conference on "The future of Christians in the Middle East" (Kaslik University of Beirut, Lebanon, 18-19 November 2011), subject to the authorisation of the Bureau;

**Next meetings:**

- 14-15 November 2011, Paris,
- 14 December 2011, Paris,
- 23-27 January 2012 (1<sup>st</sup> part-session), Strasbourg.

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**The Sub-Committee on External Relations** of the Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Strasbourg on 6 October 2011, with Mr Slutsky (Russian Federation, SOC) in the Chair:

- held an exchange of views with Mr Asylbek Jeenbekov, Vice-Speaker of the Parliament of Kirghizstan, and was informed of the intention of that Parliament to request Partner for Democracy status with the Assembly;
- welcomed a parliamentary delegation from Kazakhstan led by Mr Vladimir Bobrov, Vice-Speaker of the Mazhilis;
- agreed with the proposal by the Chair to dedicate one of the forthcoming meetings to the developments in the Arab world, and to foresee the possibility of holding a meeting in the region;
- left it to the Chair to convene its next meeting.

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**The Sub-Committee on the Middle East** of the Political Affairs Committee, meeting in Strasbourg on 6 October 2011, with Mr Corlăţean (Romania, SOC) in the Chair:

- heard a statement from Mr Vrettos (Greece, SOC) on his visit to Cairo (23-26 September 2011) and held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms Diab, Palestinian Minister for women's affairs, Mr Helmy, El-Wafd party (Egypt) and Mr de Rossa, Chairman of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council;
- held an exchange of views on the work programme of the Sub-Committee;
- left it to the Chair to convene its next meeting.

Despina Chatzivassiliou, João Ary, Pavel Chevtchenko, Silvia Arzilli

- 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  
Secretaries of observer and partner for democracy delegations  
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