



SECRETARIAT

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13 December 2013

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 10-11 December 2013

The Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, meeting in Paris on 10-11 December 2013:

- **On Tuesday 10 December 2013**, with Mr João Bosco Mota Amaral (Portugal, EPP/CD) in the Chair, paid tribute to the late **Nelson Mandela**, former President of South Africa, and as regards:
 - **Open discussion on current issues**: held an exchange of views on the French intervention in the Central African Republic; on the situation in Syria; on recent developments in Ukraine, and agreed to issue a public statement on the latter;
 - **The situation in Kosovo^{*} and the role of the Council of Europe** (*Rapporteur for follow-up: Mr Björn von Sydow, Sweden, SOC*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on the follow up to Resolution 1912 and Recommendation 2006 and called for candidates for the appointment of a rapporteur;
 - **The situation in Belarus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Andres Herkel, Estonia, EPP/CD*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, heard a statement by the Chairperson on the organisation of future work, and decided to request to the Bureau of the Assembly a one-year extension of the reference, until 9 March 2015;
 - **Sub-Committee on the Middle East**: heard a statement by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the organisation of the Sub-Committee's future work;
 - **Sub-Committee on External Relations**: heard a statement by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the organisation of the Sub-Committee's future work;
 - **Counteraction to manifestations of neo-Nazism and xenophobia** (*Rapporteur: Ms Marietta de Pourbaix-Lundin, Sweden, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on her fact-finding visit to Greece on 25 and 26 November 2013, followed by an exchange of views;
 - **Situation in Cyprus** (*Rapporteur: Mr Joachim Hörster, Germany, EPP/CD*): considered and approved an information report, and agreed that the Rapporteur may modify the position papers in appendix, subject to receiving appropriate submissions by 15 January 2014;

^{*} All references to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

- **Request for partner for democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic** (*Rapporteur: Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Turkey, EDG*): held an exchange of views on the basis of a memorandum on the visit of the *ad hoc* Sub-Committee on Kyrgyzstan, presented by its Chairperson, Mr Andreas Gross (Switzerland, SOC), and decided to declassify it; took note of the Rapporteur's intention to prepare a revised draft report for the March 2014 Committee meeting with a view to presenting it at the April 2014 part-session of the Assembly; took note of the request by the Rapporteur to conduct another fact-finding visit to Kyrgyzstan before the presentation of the report (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly), and agreed to ask the President of the Assembly to invite a delegation of the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan to attend the January 2014 part-session of the Assembly;
- **The activities of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2013-2014** (*Rapporteur: Ms Cheryl Gillan, United Kingdom, EDG*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur and took note that the Sub-Committee on relations with the OECD and the EBRD would meet in the EBRD headquarters in London on 4 February 2014;
- **Violence against Christian communities in the Middle East and the South Mediterranean and its consequences**: held an exchange of views on the scope and focus of the report, agreed to change its title which was initially *Persecution of Christians and the diminishing of Christian communities in the Muslim world, particularly in Syria*, and appointed Ms Theodora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur;
- **On Wednesday 11 December 2013**, with Mr Björn von Sydow (Sweden, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:
 - **Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Palestinian National Council** (*Rapporteur: Mr Tiny Kox, Netherlands, UEL*): heard a statement by the Rapporteur on his fact finding visit to Palestine on 13-15 November 2013; considered and approved a report and adopted, unanimously, a draft resolution;
 - **Open discussion on current issues (cont'd)**: approved a public statement whereby it expressed concern about the violent escalation of the crisis in Ukraine and called on all sides to refrain from any acts of violence and intimidation which could further undermine the stability of the country, including its democratic process; decided to set up an *ad hoc* Sub-Committee on the situation in Ukraine composed of five members, representing all political groups, for the purpose of visiting the country as soon as possible, in order to exchange views with all actors concerned and report back to the Committee; appointed MM. Çavuşoğlu, Cozmanciuc, Iwiński, Kox and Zingeris as members, and took note of the fact that for the *ad hoc* Sub-Committee to visit Ukraine, an invitation by the Ukrainian authorities and the authorisation of the Bureau of the Assembly were required ;
 - **Challenges of a federal Europe** (*Rapporteur: Mr Andreas Gross, Switzerland, SOC*): held a hearing with the participation of:
 - . Professor Dr Arthur Benz, Darmstadt University of Technology (*Technische Universität Darmstadt*), Germany,
 - . Professor Dr Mirosław Wyrzykowski, former Judge at the Polish Constitutional Tribunal, University of Warsaw, Centre for Constitutional and Legal Affairs;
- **Political transition in Egypt** (*Rapporteur: Mr José María Beneyto, Spain, EPP/CD*): in the absence of the Rapporteur, took note of the programme of the fact-finding mission to Egypt, 2-5 December 2013, and of the related press release, and agreed to return to this matter at its next meeting;
- **Work programme**: took note of a preliminary draft programme for the meeting to be held in Stockholm, Sweden, on 11-12 March 2014;
- **Authorisation by the Committee**: endorsed a request by Mr Bogdan Klich (Poland, EPP/CD) to carry out a fact-finding visit to Morocco in January-March 2014 in the framework of the preparation of the report on *Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of Morocco* (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly);

- **Other business:** was informed of, and welcomed, a draft law seeking to abolish the death penalty being prepared in the Parliament of Morocco;
- **Next meetings**
 - 27-31 January 2014 (1st part-session), Strasbourg
 - 11-12 March 2014, Stockholm
 - May 2014, date and place to be confirmed
 - 4-5 September 2014, Paris
 - 3 November 2014, Paris
 - 8-9 December 2014, Paris.

D. Chatzivassiliou, J. Ary, P. Chevtchenko, S. Arzilli

cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
Director General, Directors and all staff of the Secretariat of the Assembly
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