

SECRETARIAT

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13 September 2024

To the members of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 10 September 2024

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Paris on 10 September 2024 with first Lord Richard Keen (United Kingdom, EC/DA), Chairperson, then with Ms Lesia Vasylenko (Ukraine, ALDE), 1st Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, with the participation of Ms Despina Chatzivassiliou-Tsovilis, Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly, as regards:

- ***The detention of Julian Assange and its chilling effects on human rights*** (*Rapporteur: Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir, Iceland, SOC*): considered a draft report; agreed to modify the title of the report to “The detention and conviction of Julian Assange and their chilling effects on human rights”; and adopted a draft resolution as amended; took note that a dissenting opinion would be tabled by Lord Richard Keen (United Kingdom, EC/DA); agreed to invite Mr Assange to a forthcoming committee meeting to be held during the fourth part-session 2024 for an exchange of views, open to the public and subject to the availability of funds;

Then with Lord Richard Keen in the Chair, as regards:

- ***Exchange of views on the follow-up to:***
 - ***The arbitrary detention of Vladimir Kara-Murza and the systematic persecution of anti-war protesters in the Russian Federation and Belarus*** ([Res. 2541](#)) (*Rapporteur for follow-up: Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir, Iceland, SOC*) and
 - ***Sanctions against persons on the "Kara-Murza list"*** ([Res. 2542](#)) (*Rapporteur for follow-up : Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross, Estonia, ALDE*)

In the presence of Ms Evgenia Kara-Murza and Mr Vadim Prokhorov, held an exchange of views with Mr Vladimir Kara-Murza, Founding Chairman of the Boris Nemtsov Foundation for Freedom, Vice-president of the Free Russia Foundation, Václav Havel Human Rights Prize Winner 2022;

- ***Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine*** ([Res. 2556](#), [Rec. 2279](#)) (*Former Rapporteur: Mr. Davor Ivo Stier, Croatia, EPP/CD*): held a hearing with the participation of:

Mr Markiyan Kliuchkovskyi, Executive Director, Register of Damage for Ukraine, The Hague, Netherlands (online)

Mr Jörg Polakiewicz, Director, Directorate of Legal Advice and Public International Law, Council of Europe

Ms Jessica H. Kim, Special Prosecutor for the Crime of Aggression, U.S. Department of Justice, ICPA, EUROJUST, The Hague, the Netherlands;

- ***Private military companies, mercenaries, foreign fighters and their impact on human rights*** (*Rapporteur: Mr. Andrea Orlando, Italy, SOC*): held a hearing with the participation of:

Dr Federica Saini Fasanotti, Senior Associate Fellow, Italian Institute for International Political Studies, Milan, Italy

Professor Antonios Tzanakopoulos, Professor of Public International Law at the Faculty of Law and Fellow in Law, St Anne's College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Dr Matt Pollard, Legal Adviser, ICRC, Switzerland;

Authorised the rapporteur to conduct a fact-finding mission to Kyiv, in the context of the preparation of his report and subject to the availability of funds;

- ***Update of the Venice Commission Rule of Law Checklist***: held a hearing with the participation of:

Mr Kaarlo Heikki Tuori, Honorary President of the Venice Commission

Mr Serhiy Holovaty, Chair of the Sub-Commission on the Rule of Law of the Venice Commission

and agreed to table a motion for a resolution on this topic at a future meeting in order to provide input to the review process launched by the Venice Commission.

- ***Legal aspects of the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights*** (*Rapporteur: Mr Titus Corlăţean, Romania, SOC*): considered an updated introductory memorandum and noted the rapporteur's intention to prepare his draft report for consideration before the end of the year, taking into account also the judgment of the Court of Justice of the European Union published on the same day;

- ***References transmitted to the committee:***

- ***Appointment of a Rapporteur for opinion:***

Situation in Belarus (for opinion): decided to postpone the appointment of a Rapporteur for opinion;

- ***Call for Rapporteurs:*** made a call for rapporteurs for the following reports to be appointed at the next meeting and encouraged members to notify the secretariat of their potential interest in advance:

- Proceeds of the crime denounced by Sergei Magnitsky found in Switzerland must not be returned to the presumed perpetrators ([Doc. 15981](#));

- Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine;

- ***Improving the selection/election procedure of CPT members:*** considered a draft motion for a resolution and agreed to table it on behalf of the committee;

- ***Ensuring better protection of whistle-blowers in Europe*** (*Rapporteur: Ms Anna-Kristiina Mikkonen, Finland, SOC*): considered an introductory memorandum; agreed to the rapporteur's request to hold at least one hearing with experts at a future meeting (open to the public if the experts agree), an exchange of views with former Assembly Rapporteur on this subject, Mr Sylvain Waserman, and to conduct a fact-finding visit to Brussels, all subject to the availability of funds;

- ***Conference on "Promoting safety, integrity, equality and inclusion in sport", 4-5 November 2024, Athens:*** agreed to propose the following members to the Bureau for inclusion in the ad hoc committee in addition to those proposed in June (Mr Sergiy Vlasenko (Ukraine, EPP/CD); Ms Domenica Spinelli (Italy, EC/DA)) :

Mr Givi Mikanadze (Georgia, SOC)
Mr Branislav Borenovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina, EPP/CD)
Mr Saša Magazonovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina, SOC)
Ms Agnes Sirkka Prammer (Austria, SOC)

- ***Ad hoc committee of the Bureau to participate in the conference of the European Parliamentary Technology Assessment network (EPTA), on the theme “Artificial Intelligence and Democracy”, 21 October 2024, Oslo:*** agreed to propose the following members to the Bureau to participate in the aforementioned ad hoc committee:

Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE)
Ms Zeynep Yildiz (Türkiye, NR)

- ***Hearings during the next meetings:*** agreed to hold an exchange of views on “The detention and conviction of Julian Assange and their chilling effects on human rights” at the meeting in Strasbourg during the fourth-part session and a hearing on the protection of the profession of lawyers and the draft Council of Europe convention on this topic at the meeting in Yerevan in December;

- ***Other business:***

- ***Pegasus and similar spyware and secret State surveillance:*** agreed that, to ensure a proper follow-up to this matter, the Rapporteur for follow-up (Mr Pieter Omtzigt, Netherlands EPP/CD) should be able to take into account the relevant Venice Commission’s comparative study due to be adopted in December 2024;

- ***Attendance of the General Rapporteur for Political Prisoners at an international seminar on political prisoners in Europe, Oslo, Norway*** (8 October 2024): agreed to the request by the General Rapporteur (Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir, Iceland, SOC) to attend this event, following an invitation issued to her by the President of the Norwegian Parliament, at no cost to the Parliamentary Assembly;

- ***Next meetings:*** took note of the following meetings and that further information would be sent to members in due course:

Plenary Committee:

- during the Assembly’s 4th part-session of 2024 (30th September – 4 October 2024)
- 9-10 December 2024, Yerevan, Armenia

Sub-committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights (open to all members of the committee):

- 18-19 November 2024, Geneva

Günter Schirmer, Guillem Cano-Palomares, Rafał Sokół

cc:

Secretary General of the Assembly
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