



SECRETARIAT

AS/Pol (2025) CB 01

3 February 2025

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis

of the meetings held in Strasbourg from 27 to 30 January 2025

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Strasbourg from 27 to 30 January 2025, with first Lord David Blencathra (United Kingdom, ECPA), oldest member present, then Mr Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE), Chairperson, in the Chair:

- **on Monday 27 January 2025 at 14:00**, as regards:

- ***Election of the Bureau of the Committee:***

re-elected, by acclamation:

- Mr Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE), Chairperson,
- Mr George Papandreou (Greece, SOC), 2nd Vice-Chairperson,
- Ms Elisabetta Gardini (Italy, ECPA), 3rd Vice-Chairperson;

and elected, by acclamation, Ms Yelyzaveta Yasko (Ukraine, EPP/CD), 1st Vice-Chairperson;

- ***Constitution of sub-committees:*** reconstituted the Sub-Committee on External Relations, the Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World, and the Sub-Committee on the Western Balkans;
- ***Debate under urgent procedure: The urgent need for free and fair elections in Belarus:*** appointed Mr Ryszard Petru (Poland, ALDE) as rapporteur and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
- ***Debate under urgent procedure: European commitment to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine:*** appointed Ms Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (Finland, SOC) as rapporteur and heard from her a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
- ***Situation in the Middle East (rapporteur: Ms Dora Bakoyannis, Greece, EPP/CD):*** held a hearing with the participation of Ms Signe Brudeset, Director General at the Department for Regional Affairs, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (online), followed by an exchange of views;
- ***Co-operation with the Canadian Observer delegation:*** held an exchange of views with the Canadian Observer delegation;
- ***Standing invitations:*** decided, in accordance with Resolution 1376 (2004) and following the decision of the Bureau of the Assembly of 4 October 2004 approved the same day by the Assembly, and according to Article 48.7 of the Rules of Procedure, to invite the elected representatives of the Turkish Cypriot community to attend its meetings during the Assembly 2025 Ordinary Session; also decided, in accordance with Resolution 2530 (2024), that the representative delegation of Belarusian democratic forces attending its meetings during the Assembly 2025 Ordinary Session would have the right to speak;
- **on Tuesday 28 January 2025 at 8:30**, as regards:
- ***Sub-committees:*** approved the composition of the sub-committees (see Appendix);

- **Institutional representation:** in the framework of the Assembly’s institutional representation, and taking into account Assembly Resolution 2394 (2021) “Gender representation in the Parliamentary Assembly”, appointed the following members and substitutes, for submission to the Bureau of the Assembly:
 - Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission (CDE):
Member: Mr Titus Corlăţean (Romania, SOC), following a vote;
 - European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI):
Member: Ms Sibel Arslan (Switzerland, SOC), by acclamation,
Substitute: Mr George Loucaides (Cyprus, UEL), by acclamation;
- **The need for a renewed rules-based international order** (*rapporteur: Ms Dora Bakoyannis, Greece, EPP/CD*): took position on 27 amendments to the draft resolution and on 2 amendments to the draft recommendation, and decided to support one oral sub-amendment to the draft resolution;
- **Elections in times of crisis** (*rapporteur: Mr Damien Cottier, Switzerland, ALDE*): heard a statement by Lord David Blencathra (United Kingdom, ECPA), Chair-designate of the Parliamentary Assembly Network of Election Observers;
- **Interconnections between the Council of Europe and the European political community** (*rapporteur: Mr Zsolt Németh, Hungary, ECPA*): heard a statement by the rapporteur and authorised him to carry out a fact finding visit to Paris on 4 March 2025 (subject to the availability of funds);
- **on Tuesday 28 January 2025 at 14:00**, as regards:
 - **The urgent need for free and fair elections in Belarus** (*rapporteur: Mr Ryszard Petru, Poland, ALDE*): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution as amended;
 - **European commitment to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine** (*rapporteur: Ms Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Finland, SOC*): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution as amended;
 - **General Rapporteur on democracy:** appointed Mr George Papandreou (Greece, SOC) for a second mandate as General rapporteur on Democracy and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - **General Rapporteur on Russian democratic forces** (*General Rapporteur: Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross, Estonia, ALDE*): heard a statement by the General Rapporteur, followed by an exchange of views;
 - **A closer cooperation between the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the United States Congress:** approved a motion for a resolution to be tabled on behalf of the committee;
 - **Work programme:**
 - **Reference for consultation:** “Safeguarding the rule of law in Tunisia”, decided to advise the Bureau that this reference be referred to the committee for report;
 - **Reference for information:** took note of the reference on “The use of artificial intelligence in public decision-making processes and its impact on human rights”;
 - **Gender equality in the functioning of the Assembly:** took note of the Information memorandum prepared by the Secretariat of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination;
 - **Reporting back:** heard from Mr George Papandreou (Greece, SOC) about his participation in the OECD Global Forum on “Building Trust and Strengthening Democracy”, in Milan (Italy), on 21-22 October 2024; in the 2nd meeting of the Steering Committee for Democracy (CDDEM), in Strasbourg, on 29-30 October 2024; in the World Democracy Forum, in Strasbourg, on 6-8

November 2024; and in the Seminar on “Private Powers and the Rule of Law”, Madrid 28-29 November 2024;

- **Authorisations:** authorised Mr George Papandreou (Greece, SOC) to participate online in the conference on “Citizen participation in the climate crisis: building a permanent citizens’ parliament for the climate”, on 29 January 2025; to attend the Summit for Action on AI, in Paris, on 10 and 11 February 2025; and to attend the Munich Security Conference, in Munich, from 14 to 16 February 2025 (subject to the availability of funds);
- **Increasing members’ active participation in and contribution to the work of the Parliamentary Assembly and its committees:** took note of the introductory memorandum of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs;
- **on Thursday 30 January 2025 at 8:30, as regards:**
 - **The urgent need for free and fair elections in Belarus** (rapporteur: Mr Ryszard Petru, Poland, ALDE): took position on two amendments tabled to the draft resolution;
 - **European commitment to a just and lasting peace in Ukraine** (rapporteur: Ms Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Finland, SOC): took position on nine amendments tabled to the draft resolution, and decided to support two oral amendments and one oral sub-amendment;
 - **Strengthening mechanisms for early warning and action in conflict prevention** (rapporteur: Ms Yelyzaveta Yasko, Ukraine, EPP/CD): considered an outline report, followed by an exchange of views;
 - **Institutional representation:** appointed, by acclamation, Mr Michael Georg Link (Germany, ALDE) substitute member of the Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission (CDE), for submission to the Bureau of the Assembly;
 - **Work programme:**
 - **Appointment of Rapporteurs for report:** appointed, by acclamation:
 - Mr Andrej Hunko (Germany, UEL) as rapporteur on “Strengthening freedom of expression: an imperative for the consolidation and development of democratic societies”, subject to hearing from him a declaration of interest;
 - Mr George Papandreou (Greece, SOC) as rapporteur on “A closer cooperation between the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and the United States Congress”, subject to the motion being referred to the committee, and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest; authorised him, in the framework of his report, to carry out a fact-finding visit to Washington on 12 and 13 March 2025 to meet with representatives from the United States Congress and the State Department (subject to the authorisation of the Bureau and to the availability of funds);
 - **Declaration of conflict of interest:** heard a declaration of absence of conflict of interest from Mr George Loucaides (Cyprus, UEL), rapporteur for “Shaping the Parliamentary Assembly’s relations with the United Nations Human Rights Council”;
 - **Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau to participate in the parliamentary [conference](#) on “Envisioning effective public policy to prevent & address cases of missing migrants”**, organised as a follow-up to Resolution 2569 (2024) “Missing migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – A call to clarify their fate”, in Strasbourg, on 23-24 April 2025: called for candidates and took note of the interest of Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC) to participate in the conference;
 - **Parliamentary Network for a healthy environment:** appointed Ms Lesia Vasylenko (Ukraine, ALDE) to participate in the Network;
 - **Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau to participate in the meeting between parliamentarians from the Nordic Council and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)**, in Kristiansand, Norway, on 4-5 May 2025: took note of the interest of Ms Ingjerd Schie Schou (Norway, EPP/CD) and Mr Stephen Gethins (United Kingdom, NR) to participate in the conference;

- **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2025:** took note of the deadline of 30 April 2025 for the submission of nominations ;
- **Invitation to hold a meeting in Greece in May 2025:** took note of, and welcomed, the proposal from Ms Dora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD), Chairperson of the Greek delegation to the Assembly, to hold a meeting in Greece in May 2025 (date to be confirmed and subject to the authorisation of the Bureau);
- **on Thursday 30 January 2025 at 14:00**, as regards:
 - **Ukrainian prisoners of war, journalists and other civilians held in captivity by the Russian Federation:** held a joint hearing with the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons and the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media, with the participation of Mr Maksym Butkevych, Human rights defender, officer of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, ex-POW, journalist; Ms Leniie Umerova, recently exchanged Crimean Tatar and civilian hostage (Ukrainian citizen); Mr Yulian Pylypei, Ukrainian marine, Mariupol defender, 2.5 years in Russian captivity; Ms Nataliia Yashchuk, Senior War Consequences Officer, Center for Civil Liberties, Kyiv, followed by an exchange of views;
 - **Meetings in 2025:** took note of the meetings in 2025 to be held as follows:
 - 5 March 2025, Paris
 - April part-session (7-11 April 2025), Strasbourg
 - May 2025 (date and venue tbc)
 - June part-session (23-27 June 2025), Strasbourg
 - 10 September 2025, Paris
 - October part-session (29 September-3 October 2025), Strasbourg
 - 11 December 2025, Paris

The **Sub-Committee on External Relations**, meeting in Strasbourg on Tuesday 28 January 2025 with Mr Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE), in his capacity of Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Bureau:** re-elected, by acclamation, Ms Marietta Karamanli (France, SOC), Chairperson;
- **Date and place of the next meeting:** left it to its Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

The **Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World**, meeting in Strasbourg on Tuesday 28 January 2025 with Mr Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE), in his capacity of Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Bureau:** re-elected, by acclamation, Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC), Chairperson;
- **Date and place of the next meeting:** left it to its Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

The **Sub-Committee on the Western Balkans**, meeting in Strasbourg on Tuesday 28 January 2025 with Mr Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE), in his capacity of Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Bureau:** re-elected, by acclamation, Mr Alexis Tsipras (Greece, UEL), Chairperson;
- **Date and place of the next meeting:** left it to its Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

Catherine Hugel, Pavel Chevtchenko, Cesare Colombo, John Dorber

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

APPENDIX

Sub-Committee on External Relations of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Sous-commission des relations extérieures de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie

27 seats / 27 sièges

LIST OF MEMBERS / LISTE DES MEMBRES

Chairperson / Présidente

Mme KARAMANLI Marietta (SOC) France

Vice-Chairperson / Vice-président-e

.....

Full Members / Membres titulaires

1. Mr RUBINYAN Ruben (EPP/CD) Armenia / Arménie
2. Mr PAVIĆ Marko (EPP/CD) Croatia / Croatie
3. Ms VAN VAERENBERGH Kristien (NR) Belgium / Belgique
4. Mr BENEŠÍK Ondřej (EPP/CD) Czechia/ Tchéquie
5. Mr JENSEN Mogens (SOC) Denmark / Danemark
6. Ms KUMPULA-NATRI Miapetra (SOC) Finland / Finlande
7. Mme KARAMANLI Marietta (SOC) France
8. Mr FUNKE Fabian (SOC) Germany / Allemagne
9. Ms BAKOYANNIS Dora (EPP/CD) Greece / Grèce
10. Mr TROY Robert (ALDE) Ireland / Irlande
11. Ms GARDINI Elisabetta (ECPA) Italy / Italie
12. Mrs KALNIŅA-LUKAŠEVICA Zanda (EPP/CD) Latvia / Lettonie
13. Mr CRUCHTEN Yves (SOC) Luxembourg
14. Ms LAKOVIĆ Nađa (ALDE) Montenegro / Monténégro
15. Ms PETRUSHEVSKA Marija (EPP/CD) North Macedonia / Macédoine du Nord
16. Ms POMASKA Agnieszka (EPP/CD) Poland / Pologne
17. M. CARVALHO Ricardo (EPP/CD) Portugal
18. Mr STROE Ionuț-Marian (EPP/CD) Romania / Roumanie
19. Ms PANTIĆ PILJA Biljana (EPP/CD) Serbia / Serbie
20. Mr GUTIÉRREZ LIMONES Antonio (SOC) Spain / Espagne
21. Ms ARSLAN Sibel (SOC) Switzerland / Suisse
22. Mr TÜRKES Yıldırım Tuğrul (NR) Türkiye
23. Lord BLENCATHRA David (ECPA) United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
- 24.
- 25.
- 26.
- 27.

Alternates / Remplaçant-e-s

- Mr DE BRABANDERE Bob (ECPA)
- M. MARIE Didier (SOC)
- Ms DAĞDELEN Sevim (UEL)
- Mr OIKONOMOU Ioannis (EPP/CD)
- Ms O'LOUGHLIN Fiona (ALDE)
- Mr KONATAR Miloš (SOC)
- Mr TRUSKOLASKI Krzysztof (EPP/CD)
- Ms ESTRELA Edite (SOC)
- Mr CORLĂȚEAN Titus (SOC)
- Mr MIRKOVIĆ Aleksandar (EPP/CD)
- Mr ROBLES Gonzalo (EPP/CD)
- M. COTTIER Damien (ALDE)
- Mr TAN Namık (SOC)
- Lord FOULKES George (SOC)

Ex officio: M. Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE)

Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy
Président de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie

**Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World
of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**

**Sous-commission sur le Proche-Orient et le monde arabe
de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie**

27 seats / 27 sièges

LIST OF MEMBERS / LISTE DES MEMBRES

Chairperson / Président

M. FASSINO Piero (SOC) Italy / Italie

Vice-Chairperson / Vice-président-e

.....

Full Members / Titulaires

Alternates / Remplaçant-e-s

1.	Mr VARDANYAN Vladimir (EPP/CD)	Armenia / Arménie	
2.	Ms LAMBRECHT Annick (SOC)	Belgium / Belgique	M. RIBAUDO Julien (GUE)
3.	Mr LOUCAIDES George (UEL)	Cyprus / Chypre	
4.	Mr JENSEN Mogens (SOC)	Denmark / Danemark	
5.	M. KERN Claude (ALDE)	France	
6.	Mr LUCKS Max (SOC)	Germany / Allemagne	Mr ULLRICH Volker (EPP/CD)
7.	Mr TSIPRAS Alexis (UEL)	Greece / Grèce	Ms BAKOYANNIS Dora (EPP/CD)
8.	Ms O'LOUGHLIN Fiona (ALDE)	Ireland / Irlande	
9.	Ms BERGAMINI Deborah (EPP/CD)	Italy / Italie	
10.	M. FASSINO Piero (SOC)	Italy / Italie	
11.	Mr GRAAS Gusty (ALDE)	Luxembourg	
12.	Mr WILDERS Geert (ECPA)	Netherlands / Pays-Bas	Mr van de SANDEN Cees (ALDE)
13.	Mr TRUSKOLASKI Krzysztof (EPP/CD)	Poland / Pologne	
14.	Ms ESTRELA Edite (SOC)	Portugal	
15.	Mr TRUSKOLASKI Krzysztof (EPP/CD)	Poland / Pologne	
16.	Mr CORLĂȚEAN Titus (SOC)	Romania / Roumanie	
17.	Ms PANTIĆ PILJA Biljana (EPP/CD)	Serbia / Serbie	Mr GUTIÉRREZ PRIETO Sergio (SOC)
18.	Mr ROBLES Gonzalo (EPP/CD)	Spain / Espagne	M. COTTIER Damien (ALDE)
19.	Mr HEER Alfred (ALDE)	Switzerland / Suisse	Mr KOÇAK Konur Alp (NR)
20.	Ms ÇELİK KANAT Sena Nur (NR)	Türkiye	
21.			
22.			
23.			
24.			
25.			
26.			
27.			

Ex officio: M. Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE)

Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy
Président de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie

**Sub-Committee on the Western Balkans
of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**

**Sous-commission sur les Balkans occidentaux
de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie**

27 seats / 27 sièges

LIST OF MEMBERS / LISTE DES MEMBRES

Chairperson / Président

Mr TSIPRAS Alexis (UEL) Greece / Grèce

Vice-Chairperson / Vice-président-e

.....

Full Members / Membres titulaires

Alternates / Remplaçant-e-s

1. Mr VARDANYAN Vladimir (EPP/CD)	Armenia / Arménie	
2. M. RIBAUDO Julien (GUE)	Belgium / Belgique	Ms VAN VAERENBERGH Kristien (NR)
3. Ms SACHEVA Denitsa (EPP/CD)	Bulgaria / Bulgarie	
4. Mme KARAMANLI Marietta (SOC)	France	M. CADEC Alain (EPP/CD)
5. Mme TANGUY Liliana (ALDE)	France	M. Didier MARIE (France, SOC)
6. Mr SCHÄFER Axel (SOC)	Germany / Allemagne	
7. Mr TSIPRAS Alexis (UEL)	Greece / Grèce	Mr PAPANDREOU George (SOC)
8. Mr TROY Robert (ALDE)	Ireland / Irlande	
9. Mr DREOSTO Marco (ECPA)	Italy / Italie	Mr FASSINO Piero (SOC)
10. Ms GARDINI Elisabetta (ECPA)	Italy / Italie	
11. Mr CRUCHTEN Yves (SOC)	Luxembourg	Mr GRAAS Gusty (ALDE)
12. Ms VOGELS Rian (ALDE)	Netherlands / Pays-Bas	
13. Ms PETRUSHEVSKA Marija (EPP/CD)	North Macedonia / Macédoine du Nord	
14. Mr SAID Chris (EPP/CD)	Malta / Malte	
15. Ms LAKOVIĆ Nađa (ALDE)	Montenegro / Monténégro	Mr KONATAR Miloš (SOC)
16. Ms POMASKA Agnieszka (EPP/CD)	Poland / Pologne	
17. Mr CARVALHO Ricardo (EPP/CD)	Portugal	
18. Mr MUNCACIU Sorin-Titus (ECPA)	Romania / Roumanie	Ms MITREA Dumitrina (ECPA)
19. Ms SIMONOVIĆ BRATIĆ Dunja (SOC)	Serbia / Serbie	Ms KOVÁCS Elvira (EPP/CD)
20. Mr GUTIÉRREZ LIMONES Antonio (SOC)	Spain / Espagne	
21. Ms BINDER-KELLER Marianne (EPP/CD)	Switzerland / Suisse	Ms ARSLAN Sibel (SOC)
22. Mr TAN Namık (SOC)	Türkiye	Ms ÇELİK KANAT Sena Nur (NR)
23. Mr GETHINS Stephen (NR)	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni	Lord BLENCATHRA David (ECPA)
24.		
25.		
26.		
27.		

Ex officio: M. Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE)

Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy
Président de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie