

Declassified¹

AS/Pol/inf (2024) 12

9 September 2024

Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

General rapporteur on Russian democratic forces: Mr Eerik Kross (Estonia, ALDE)

**Information document
Mandate. Goals. Road Map.**

¹ Declassified by the Committee at its meeting on 9 September 2024.

A. Mandate and responsibilities

Mandate

The mandate of the general rapporteur on Russian democratic forces is to establish and pursue a structured and regular dialogue between the Assembly and the Russian democratic forces, with a view to supporting their efforts to bring about a democratic change in Russia.

The mandate stems from PACE Resolutions and documents, inter alia:

[Opinion 300 \(2022\)](#) *Consequences of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine*

[Resolution 2433 \(2022\)](#) *Consequences of the Russian Federation's continued aggression against Ukraine: role and response of the Council of Europe*

[Resolution 2473 \(2022\)](#) *Strengthening the role of the Council of Europe as a cornerstone of the European political architecture*

[Resolution 2509 \(2023\)](#) *Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights*

[Resolution 2519 \(2023\)](#) *Examining the legitimacy and legality of the ad hominem term-limit waiver for the incumbent President of the Russian Federation*

[Resolution 2530 \(2024\)](#) *A Democratic Future for Belarus*

[Resolution 2540 \(2024\)](#) *Alexei Navalny's death and the need to counter Vladimir Putin's totalitarian regime and its war on democracy*

[Resolution 2541 \(2024\)](#) *The arbitrary detention of Vladimir Kara-Murza and the systematic persecution of anti-war protesters in the Russian Federation and Belarus*

[Resolution 2542 \(2024\)](#) *Sanctions against persons on the "Kara-Murza list"*

General rapporteur on Russian democratic forces [Terms of Reference](#) (as ratified by the Assembly in June 2024)

PACE rules and practice regarding the work of general rapporteurs

Definition of Russian democratic forces

As established in PACE Resolution 2540 (2024) and other documents, the Russian democratic forces are political organisations and individuals of the Russian Federation, both in Russia and in exile that:

- share the values of the Council of Europe;
- recognise the rules-based international order;
- respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine;
- and are actively opposing Putin's regime with the goal to establish a democratic Russia.

Responsibilities

The role of the general rapporteur in fulfilling the mandate is to:

- keep close contact with Russian democratic forces acting as a focal point in pursuing a two-way dialogue between them and the Assembly;
- work closely together and co-ordinate actions with the other Assembly's general rapporteurs and rapporteurs, particularly with the general rapporteur for political prisoners and the general rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders;
- follow activities and maintain working relations, when need arises, with different Council of Europe institutions and bodies which deal with issues relating to Russia, including the Committee of Ministers, the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Secretary General and the President of the Assembly;

- contribute to the activities of the Contact Platform for dialogue with representatives of Russian democratic forces, under the leadership of the President of the Assembly, and deputise for the President when requested;
- follow activities and maintain working relations with relevant bodies and agencies of the United Nations, the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and with other international governmental and inter-parliamentary organisations;
- promote relevant parliamentary initiatives at national level;
- represent the committee on behalf of the Assembly vis-à-vis any of the above-mentioned bodies and groups, when relevant and appropriate;
- follow up previous resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly on issues related to Russian democratic forces and on countering Putin's war on democracy;
- enhance the external visibility and outreach of the work and role of the Assembly relating to Russia and/or Russian democratic forces, including the follow-up and promotion of adopted resolutions and recommendations of the Assembly;
- in appropriate cases, make public statements, launch appeals, or propose to do so to the Committee.

B. Goals

1. Support Russian democratic forces in their activities aimed at bringing about a democratic change in Russia;
2. prepare the Assembly to be ready for and help the transformation of Russia into a democracy when such an opportunity arises in the near to medium-term;
3. propose, in consultation with the Russian democratic forces, a broad array of democracy support measures before and after the change of power in Russia, including the ones necessary to sustain democratic change in Russia over the long term;
4. support Russian democratic forces' communication with Russian society and societies in liberal democracies around the globe;
5. propose a legal framework in the Council Member States to allow Russian democratic opposition and civil society activists to continue their work while in exile (establish a 'democracy passport' and special visa arrangements) while limiting the activities of pro-Putin forces;
6. counter the transnational repression, disinformation, discreditation and infiltration operations of Putin's regime against Russian democratic forces and activists in Council of Europe member states; propose concrete measures and policies to member states to defend them against these operations;
7. elaborate a practical non-recognition policy (a comprehensive approach for member states and their institutions) for handling relations with the illegitimate regime in Russia,
8. elaborate ways to create a distinction between those Russians who either support the criminal war against Ukraine or hope to sit by the sidelines, and Russian democratic forces, with the goal to create clear advantages to the latter and restrictions to the former;
9. when appropriate, facilitate dialogue between Ukraine and Russian democratic forces.

C. Road map (practical steps) with deadlines

1. Map Russian democratic forces, establish lines of communication, agree on regular exchange of information (by October session 2024);
2. in cooperation with the Russian democratic forces representatives draft a memorandum of cooperation and present it to the Committee and subsequently to the Assembly for approval (2024 October part-session – 2025 January part-session);
3. on the basis of an Assembly resolution to be debated in January 2025, propose the Russian democratic forces to appoint a permanent dialogue delegation to the Assembly;
4. following the setting up of a delegation of Russian democratic forces, provide it with access badges and appropriate premises;
5. agree on a calendar of side events; one side event per session;
6. draft recommendations for member states for a "democracy passport" programme implementation including measures of vetting, security risk management and transparency (January session 2025);
7. negotiate with a member state government on a pilot project of a "democracy passport" programme for Russian democratic forces/Berlin Declaration signatories;
8. map legal and administrative challenges for Russian democratic forces residing in member states and propose solutions to overcome them, building upon the result of the pilot project mentioned above (a draft resolution by June 2025);
9. endorse the [Berlin Declaration](#) in a PACE resolution (April 2025);
10. synchronise planning with the EU Parliament relevant initiatives (ongoing).