



Strasbourg, 14 August 2020

CDDG-Bu(2020)18

**BUREAU OF THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE
ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE
(CDDG)**

**REPORT OF THE MEETING
HELD BY VIDEOCONFERENCE, 30 JULY 2020**

1. Opening of the meeting

Mr Markku Mölläri, Chair *ad interim* of the CDDG, opened the meeting and welcomed members. The list of participants is set out in Appendix I.

2. Adoption of the agenda

The draft agenda was adopted as set out in Appendix II.

3. Recent developments

The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the precautionary measures related to the Covid-19 pandemic as applied by the Council of Europe. Large meetings with the participation of international experts would continue to be held online in September and a lot of uncertainty remained after that. The election of several senior Council of Europe officials had to be postponed. The Secretary General had published [an annual report](#) on multilateralism and the response to Covid-19. She announced her intention to resume as from 2021 her predecessor's practice of issuing a periodic report on the state of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe.

The Bureau took note of the information.

4. Thematic meeting on "A Democratic Governance Response to COVID-19", 18 June 2020 - Feedback and lessons to be drawn and follow-up to the meeting

Following a presentation by the Secretariat, the Bureau discussed a revised outline for a report on *Democratic governance and Covid-19*. The report would be based on the presentations given and the discussions held during the thematic meeting and the analysis of the replies to the Rapid Response Service No. 38. Case studies drawn from these replies would also be included. All the replies received from member States would be compiled *in extenso* in a separate document appended to the report. The Bureau also discussed and commented upon the Chair's Summing up and Conclusions of the thematic meeting and expressed the wish to follow the activities of the Greek chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers, in particular as regards the Athens Declaration and the ministerial meeting in November.

The Bureau agreed on a structure and format for the report. It underlined the need for the study to have a constructive approach and to take into account the political sensitivity of the subject matter, including in its wording. The collection of information and updates via the Rapid Response Service questionnaire should be pursued so as to reflect the different stages of the response. A reminder should be sent out to this end. While replies could be sent at any time, a deadline should be set for replies to be taken into account at the forthcoming meeting of the CDDG.

5. 11th Plenary meeting of the CDDG by videoconference

At the Chair's invitation, the Secretariat presented the draft agenda for the 11th plenary meeting of the CDDG. The Secretariat also proposed to hold the meeting on 10 and 11 September, to avoid overlapping with the meeting of the GR-DEM and to enable the Chair of the CDDG to be present in Strasbourg to facilitate the smooth running of the meeting.

The Bureau agreed with the new dates and pointed out that an order of business indicating the time of different items would be useful. The Bureau also asked the Secretariat to include in the agenda an exchange of views with a senior government representative of a member State, preferably from Greece.

6. Other business

The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the meeting of the working group on democracy and technology in September should be rescheduled to avoid the overlapping with a meeting of a CAHAI working group.

The Secretariat presented two documents for consideration: a) the *Guidelines on e-democracy in the form of a toolkit*, which had been finalised following the work by the Rapporteurs and the additional instructions from the Bureau, and should be approved by the CDDG at its 11th meeting; b) a draft questionnaire on accountability of local and regional officials, which should be sent to all CDDG delegations in order to collect information in relation to the work of the working group on accountability. The Bureau agreed that members who wished to do so should send comments to the Secretariat by 7 August.

7. Date and place of the next meeting

The Bureau decided to hold its next meeting on 24 August 2020 by videoconference in order to discuss the preparation of the 11th plenary meeting of the CDDG. The Secretariat would inform the Bureau as soon as possible whether the October meeting would be held in Paris or by videoconference.

APPENDIX I**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****CHAIR AD INTERIM / PRESIDENT AD INTERIM**

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APPENDIX II

AGENDA

1. **Opening of the meeting**
2. **Adoption of the agenda** [CDDG-Bu(2020)OJ4]
3. **Recent developments**
Council of Europe: oral information by the Secretariat
4. **Thematic meeting on "A Democratic Governance Response to COVID-19", 18 June 2020**
 - Feedback and lessons to be drawn
 - Follow-up to the meeting
 - Conclusions by the Chair [CDDG-Bu(2020)16]
 - Updated [webpage](#) [CDDG-Bu(2020)17]
 - Revised outline of a report
5. **11th Plenary meeting of the CDDG by videoconference, 10 September (1st part) and 11 or 15 September (2nd part) 2020**
 - Dates of the meeting
 - Working methods
 - Consideration of the preliminary draft agenda [CDDG(2020)OJ1 prov.]
6. **Other business**
7. **Date and place of the next meeting**