



SECRETARIAT

AS/Pol (2026) CB 04

21 May 2026

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 20 May 2026

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Paris on 20 May 2026, first with Ms Elisabetta Gardini (Italy, ECPA), Chairperson, then with Ms Deborah Bergamini (Italy, EPP/CD), second Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, as regards:

- ***Protecting democracy from disruptions caused by artificial intelligence*** (*rapporteur: Ms Deborah Bergamini, Italy, EPP/CD*): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution; and decided to propose to the Bureau to invite Ms Kristina Kallas, Minister of Education and Research of the Republic of Estonia, to address the Assembly in the context of the debate on the report;
- ***Democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Iran*** (*rapporteur: Mr Max Lucks, Germany, SOC*): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution, as amended; and decided to propose to the Bureau to invite Ms Cécile Kohler and Mr Jacques Paris, the French former hostages in Iran, to give their testimony in the context of the debate on the report;
- ***Journalism in the context of the Israel-Gaza conflict*** (*rapporteur for opinion: Ms Lise Selnes, Norway, SOC*): considered and unanimously adopted a draft opinion, as amended;
- ***Digital transformation: the role of the OECD in evaluating the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the future of work*** (*rapporteur: Ms Marietta Karamanli, France, SOC*): considered an introductory memorandum, followed by an exchange of views;
- ***The promotion of democratic security in Europe through soft power*** (*rapporteur: Ms Yelyzaveta Yasko, Ukraine, EPP/CD*): held a hearing with the participation of Mr Philippe Bischof, Strategic consultant in cultural policy and change management, Metrum, followed by an exchange of views;
- ***Political consequences of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine*** (*rapporteur: Mr Piero Fassino, Italy, SOC*): heard a statement by the rapporteur, followed by an exchange of views;
- ***Situation in Belarus*** (*rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the rapporteur, and held an online exchange of views with Ms Alexandra Mamaeva and Mr Pavel Latushka, members of the representative delegation of Belarusian democratic forces to the Assembly;
- ***Work programme:***
 - ***Appointment of rapporteurs for report:*** appointed, by acclamation, subject to the completion of the obligation to update their declaration of interests to include the rapporteur role, within the relevant deadline:
 - Ms Saskia Kluit (Netherlands, SOC) as rapporteur on “The convergence of extremist, autocratic and oligarchic threats to democracy in Europe”,
 - Mr Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE) as rapporteur on “Towards a Euro-Atlantic strategy for the Arctic in support of the rules-based international order”,
 - Mr Christophe Brico (Monaco, EPP/CD) as rapporteur on “Peace and security in the emerging global order”,

- Ms Lesia Zaburanna (Ukraine, ALDE) as rapporteur on “The security of critical infrastructure as a pillar of democratic stability in Europe”,
- Mr Gustaf Gothberg (Sweden, EPP/CD) as rapporteur on “A strong response to the Epstein files: ensuring full transparency and accountability”,
- Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC) as rapporteur on “Democratic security in the Western Balkans”;
- **General rapporteur for a Democratic Belarus:** called for candidates and took note of the candidature of Mr Ryszard Petru (Poland, ALDE);
- **Meeting of the Committee in Rome, in March 2027:** took note of and welcomed the invitation of the Chairperson of the Italian delegation to the Assembly, and decided to hold its meeting in Rome in March 2027 (date to be confirmed and subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly);
- **Meetings in 2026:** took note of the meetings to be held as follows:
 - Third part-session 2026 (22-26 June), Strasbourg
 - Tuesday 8 September 2026, Paris
 - Fourth part-session 2026 (28 September-2 October), Strasbourg
 - Friday 11 December 2026, Paris.

Catherine Hugel, Cesare Colombo, John Dorber, Eugen Schoenfeld

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
Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe