



SECRETARIAT

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14 September 2026

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis

of the meeting held in Paris on 8 September 2026

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Paris on 8 September 2026, first with Ms Elisabetta Gardini (Italy, ECPA), Chairperson, then with Ms Liliana Tanguy (France, ALDE), third Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, as regards:

- **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*): agreed to change the title of the report to *The role of the OECD in evaluating the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the future of work*, considered a draft report, and adopted a draft resolution, as amended;
- **Strengthening early warning mechanisms for democracy backsliding** (*rapporteur: Ms Yelyzaveta Yasko, Ukraine, EPP/CD*): agreed to change the title of the report to *Democratic security: strengthening Council of Europe's early warning mechanisms*, considered a draft report and, following an exchange of views, decided to postpone the adoption of a draft resolution and a draft recommendation to one of its next meetings to allow for further discussion;
- **Strengthening freedom of expression: an imperative for the consolidation and development of democratic societies** (*rapporteur: Mr George Loucaides, Cyprus, UEL*): held a hearing with the online participation of Ms Silkie Carlo, Director, Big Brother Watch, United Kingdom, and Mr Aris Constantinides, member of the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 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;
- **The convergence of extremist, autocratic and oligarchic threats to democracy in Europe** (*rapporteur: Ms Saskia Kluit, Netherlands, SOC*): held a hearing with the participation of Mr David C. Lingelbach, Professor of Entrepreneurship, Merrick School of Business, The University of Baltimore, and the Founder and Executive Chair of The Center for the Study of Oligarchs, Ms Ingrid Robeyns, Chair in Ethics of Institutions, Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Utrecht University, and Ms Valentina Rodríguez Guerra, Founder and Executive Director of The Center for the Study of Oligarchs (online), followed by an exchange of views;
- **Democratic security in the Western Balkans** (*rapporteur: Mr Piero Fassino, Italy, SOC*): heard a statement by the rapporteur, and held a hearing with the online participation of Mr Thomas Hagleitner, Head of Unit/Deputy to the Director, Directorate-General for Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood (DG ENEST), European Commission, followed by an exchange of views;
- **Open discussion on current political issues: developments in the Middle East**: held a hearing with the participation of Mr Gilles Kepel, Professor, political scientist, specialised in the contemporary Middle East, followed by an exchange of views;
- **Letter from the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Ethics, and Immunities regarding the confidentiality of Assembly documents**: heard a statement by Mr Christophe Brico (Monaco, EPP/CD), Chairperson of the Committee on Rules, Ethics, and Immunities, and took note of the letter;

- **General rapporteur on Russian democratic forces:** reappointed, by acclamation, Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross (Estonia, ALDE) as the General Rapporteur on Russian democratic forces, subject to the completion of the obligation to update the declaration of interests to include the rapporteur role, within the relevant deadline;
- **Authorisations by the Committee:** authorised Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC), in his capacity as rapporteur on “Democratic security in the Western Balkans”, to carry-out fact-finding visits to Albania and North Macedonia in the forthcoming months;
- **Meetings in 2026:** took note of the meetings to be held as follows:
 - Fourth part-session 2026 (28 September-2 October), Strasbourg
 - 9-11 November 2026, New York, Sub-Committee on External Relations
 - 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