



AS/Per (2023) PV 03

19 June 2023

Standing Committee

Minutes

of the meeting held in Riga

on Friday 26 May 2023 from 10:00 to 13:00 and from 14:30 to 16:30

1. Opening of the meeting by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly

Mr Tiny Kox, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, **opened** the meeting and welcomed all those present.

2. Welcome address by Mr Edvards Smiltēns, Speaker of the Saeima

Mr Smiltēns noted that Latvia had taken over the presidency of the Committee of Ministers at a critical juncture for the European security and the rules-based international order. With its brutal war of aggression against Ukraine, Russia was attempting to annihilate the power of law in international relations and replace it with the law of power. It was crucial to ensure that Russia fails, and never again resorts to aggression as an instrument of foreign policy. It was also crucial to ensure full accountability. Europe had demonstrated that it was fully aware of the existential threat posed by the Russian aggression to peace, stability, and prosperity in the continent and that it was willing to bear the costs to help Ukraine restoring its territorial integrity. With its allies, it had remained united, resilient, and unambiguous. It should continue on this path as its future depended on it. The Council of Europe had demonstrated that it was fit for purpose by expelling Russia and greatly contributing to tackling accountability at the 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government. Russia's accountability would be high on the agenda of Latvian Presidency, the Saeima, and the Latvian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly.

3. Exchange of views with Mr Edgars Rinkēvičs, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia

[CM/Inf (2023) 10]

Mr Rinkēvičs welcomed the commitment to the core values of the Council of Europe expressed by the Heads of State and Government at the 4th Summit. These values were more important than ever against the background of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. The Latvian presidency's work would be guided by the decisions taken at the Summit and would focus on their implementation, counting on the Assembly's input in the process. The Council of Europe should continue to support Ukraine and its people as long as necessary. Russia should withdraw its forces not only from Ukraine, but also from Georgia and the Republic of Moldova. Ensuring Russia's full accountability would be high on the agenda of the Latvian Presidency which would proceed with the operational launch of the Register of Damage. Efforts should continue to establish a special tribunal for the crime of aggression under the auspices of the United Nations, to which the Council of Europe could contribute with its expertise. The Minister stressed the Assembly's impact on shaping the Organisation's agenda. He then shared details of the main priorities of the Latvian presidency, namely strengthening democracy and the rule of law, promoting freedom of expression, the safety of journalists and the digital agenda of the Council of Europe, and advancing reforms of the Organisation.

Mr Corlăţean asked what solution could be envisaged for the establishment of a special tribunal for the crime of aggression and how the Assembly could accelerate it. He also raised a question on the prospect of accession of Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia to the European Union.

Ms Mezentseva invited the Latvian presidency to pay a particular attention to the issue of deported Ukrainian children. The International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees should be able to proceed with their mandates, including by visiting places where Ukrainian children were being held.

Mr Howell asked whether the Council of Europe could come back to the idea of establishing a Commissioner for democracy in the near future.

Concerning the special tribunal for the crime of aggression, **Mr Rinkēvičs** said that two models were being discussed: a tribunal created by the United Nations – a solution Latvia favoured – and a hybrid tribunal. The latter would require overcoming obstacles related to Ukraine's legal system, including its Constitution. The Assembly's opinion on this issue would be welcome. Mr Rinkēvičs reminded that the European Commission was monitoring progress by Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia to address the reform priorities identified in its Opinions as part of the next 'Enlargement package' due in the Autumn. He hoped that the outcome would be positive and accession talks could start before the end of 2023. Latvia would do everything in its power to bring deported Ukrainian children back and ensure accountability for this crime. The discussion around the establishment of a Commissioner for democracy could continue, bearing in mind that the mandate of such an institution and its interactions with other Council of Europe bodies would need to be carefully considered.

Ms Stienen asked how the Latvian presidency would address the early signals of human rights backsliding, including concerning the rights of minorities, the LGBTI community and women, and ensure that the Council of Europe Conventions, in particular the Istanbul Convention, would be implemented.

Mr Pocij noted that difficulties in ensuring the execution of the European Court of Human Rights' judgments concerned strong democracies as well. He asked the Minister's views on the challenges of hybrid warfare, including the use of migration as a weapon.

Recalling that the 4th Summit had laid down the foundation for the new intergovernmental Committee on environment and human rights, **Mr Daems** asked whether such a committee could be up and running in 2024.

Concerning the last point, **Mr Rinkēvičs** said that the Latvian presidency would do its best stressing however that launching the new committee depended on a collective decision. The implementation of the Court's judgments was a priority for the Latvian presidency regardless of the country concerned. The discussion on hybrid warfare was a not an easy one, but one that had to take place. The right balance had to be found between protecting national and European borders and guaranteeing migrants' rights. Opposition against the Istanbul Convention had to be overcome by explaining why the opponents' arguments were unfounded rather than simply dismissing them. Politicians had an important responsibility in this context.

Mr Zingeris welcomed the Latvian President's strong stand for the establishment of a special tribunal for the crime of aggression and called on Latvia to push for the criminalisation of sanctions evasion throughout Europe.

Mr Cottier raised a question on the co-operation between the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly in the implementation of the decisions taken at the 4th Summit.

Mr Németh asked the Minister's view on the possible introduction of a qualified majority voting for EU decisions on foreign policy.

Mr Rinkēvičs recalled that sanctions evasion was already criminalised in Latvia. Other countries should follow Latvia's example and a uniform EU policy was needed. A secondary sanctions regime should also be introduced. The Assembly was the Committee of Ministers' principal partner on each line of decision. Latvia was very sceptical on the possible introduction of a qualified majority voting and considered the constructive abstention mechanism to be more efficient in achieving results.

Mr Tahiri asked the Minister's position on the accession of Kosovo* to the Council of Europe.

Mr Katrougalos wondered what could be done at the European level to reverse the trend of increasing social injustice which was one of reasons of democratic backsliding.

Mr Tornaritis asked Latvia's position on current global challenges such as climate change and cybersecurity.

Mr Rinkēvičs reminded that Latvia had supported the accession of Kosovo* to the Council of Europe. During its presidency of the Committee of Ministers, it was ready to work with the Assembly to ensure that the process goes smoothly. He stressed that Europe should have a more united position on how to address social issues despite major differences between and within countries. The Council of Europe was taking a leading role in addressing some of the global challenges as demonstrated by its ongoing work on artificial intelligence. The standard-setting work on this issue needed to be finalised and would be instrumental in leading the way for the rest of the world.

4. Examination of new credentials

[Doc. 15775]

The Standing Committee **ratified** the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Austria, Georgia, Germany and the Republic of Moldova.

5. Modifications in the composition of committees

[Commissions (2023) 05, Commissions (2023) 05 Add.]

The Standing Committee **approved** changes in the composition of Assembly committees as set out in document Commissions (2023) 05 and its addendum.

6. Requests for a current affairs debate (under Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure)

The President informed members that the five political groups had requested a current affairs debate on "The follow-up to the Reykjavík Summit" and on "Excluding athletes from Russia and Belarus from taking part in the Olympics". The Bureau had agreed to recommend holding these current affairs debates proposing Ms Fiona O'Loughlin and Mr Indrek Saar as first speakers.

* All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

Ms Schou supported the holding of a current affairs debate on the second issue stating that the Assembly should take a clear stand against the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes in the Olympics.

The Standing Committee **approved** the proposal of the Bureau to hold the two current affairs debates.

7. Agenda

[AS/Per (2023) OJ 03 rev2]

The draft agenda was **adopted**.

8. Third part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly (19-23 June 2023)

[AS/Bur (2023) 25 rev]

The Standing Committee **took note** of the preliminary draft agenda of the third-part session.

9. References to committees

[AS/Per (2023) 09]

The Standing Committee **ratified** the references proposed by the Bureau (see Appendix 1).

10. Current affairs debate on “The follow-up to the Reykjavik Summit”.

[Reykjavik Declaration, AS/Per (2023) 10]

The President opened the debate and welcomed **Ms Aoife Nolan**, President of the European Committee of Social Rights.

Ms O’Loughlin noted that the Reykjavik Summit – which was part of Europe’s response to the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine – was a success to which the Assembly had greatly contributed. The final Declaration gave a strong message of unity where European leaders had reaffirmed, in the strongest terms and at the highest level, their unfaltering commitment to human rights, democracy and the rule of law, and stated their full and unequivocal support for Ukraine. There could not be peace without accountability. In this context, the Assembly should welcome the main achievement of the Summit namely the establishment of the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine and encourage more countries to become Parties. The political support for the establishment of a special tribunal for the crime of aggression – which the Assembly has been calling for – was also an important result. The Reykjavik Declaration had also provided a new direction for the Council of Europe for the years to come, acknowledging its impact in fostering greater unity between its member States, and its central role in the evolving European multilateral architecture. The Assembly should play its part in translating the Summit’s vision into concrete results. As members of national parliaments, Assembly members should do their utmost to ensure that the Declaration was followed up at national level, including by ensuring and mobilising the level of budgetary resources commensurate with the mandate and tasks given to the Organisation.

Ms Nolan noted that the Reykjavik Declaration had put social rights front and centre in its vision for the Council of Europe. The Heads of State and Government had stressed the crucial role of social justice for democratic stability and security and reaffirmed their “full commitment to the protection and implementation of social rights as guaranteed by the European Social Charter system.” Ms Nolan briefly recalled the monitoring role of the European Committee of Social Rights (ECSR) through consideration of State reports and decision-making on collective complaints. While the Charter was first and foremost a social rights instrument – and a legally binding one –, the ECSR’s work covered issues as various as physical punishment of children, access to justice, domestic violence, child trafficking and sexual exploitation. Ms Nolan referred to the ECSR’s long-standing relationship with the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development and its Sub-Committee on the European Social Charter and praised their work. Based on concrete examples, she illustrated the potential for increasing collaboration with all other Assembly Committees. Parliamentarians could contribute directly to the achievement of social rights in Europe by pushing for implementation of the ECSR’s conclusions and decisions. The Reykjavik Declaration had made clear that a key deliverable in terms of social rights would be the organisation of a High-Level Conference on the European Social Charter, which she invited the Assembly to champion.

Mr Corlăţean agreed that the Summit was a success both in terms of the level of participation and its outcome. It was now fundamental to ensure a proper follow-up with a clear roadmap. The Assembly’s role remained key in this context, not least by ensuring that the Council of Europe has the adequate resources to fulfil its task.

Mr Howell also agreed that the Summit was a success. At an international level, the good political coverage of the Summit had given visibility to the Council of Europe. At a national level, it had made clear that all member States were fully committed to the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights.

Mr Katrougalos came back to the importance of proper follow-up and implementation. He stressed that social rights were human rights and not just the rights of the poor, and that the European Social Charter was not normatively inferior to the European Convention on Human Rights. Expressing his disappointment about the Declaration's weak reference to the European Social Charter, he emphasised that social justice was crucial for democratic security.

Mr Jónsson welcomed the success of the Summit the deliverables of which were very much the result of the Assembly's work. The Assembly and national parliaments had to push for moving forward with the commitments made in the final declaration.

Mr Daems asked whether the ECSR was planning to work towards the inclusion of the right to a healthy environment in the European Social Charter in line with the Assembly Recommendation 2211 (2021) "Anchoring the right to a healthy environment: need for enhanced action by the Council of Europe".

Ms Kalniņa-Lukaševica said that the Latvian Presidency would work hard to implement the decisions taken at the Summit. Saving the deported Ukrainian children should be an absolute priority. Thanks to their presence in Russia, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UNHCR could relocate and bring these children back to Ukraine. Completing the work on a legal instrument on artificial intelligence was also fundamental.

Mr Kiljunen also welcomed the Summit's success and the Assembly's contribution to it. The Register of Damage, in addition to ensuring accountability, would also be a model for the future. The Council of Europe had an increasing role on security, in particular given the complete paralysis of the OSCE.

Ms Stienen said that the Reykjavík Declaration was a good start for moving forward. It was vital to ensure that citizens understood the importance of human rights protection. They should feel why the Council of Europe's work mattered.

Mr Zingeris proposed adding a word to the draft declaration reflecting the urgency of establishing a special tribunal for the crime of aggression.

Mr Tornaritis informed members that the Cypriot Parliament had recently voted a total ban of all forms of conversion therapy and wondered what the situation was in other member States.

Mr Hunko asked whether there had been any progress in developing the European Social Charter and whether the Assembly recommendation to study the feasibility of adding new rights to the catalogue of rights already protected by the Charter had been picked up.

Mr Pocij wondered how the implementation of the European Court of Human Rights' judgments could be strengthened.

Ms Nolan said that the ECSR was very much in favour of an additional Protocol which would include the right to a healthy environment. Notwithstanding the decision on drawing up such a protocol, both the European Court of Human Rights and the ECSR were already addressing this right in their work. She believed that compared to declarations from previous Summits where reference to the European Social Charter had been vague, there had been a positive shift in the Reykjavík Declaration. The High-Level Conference on the European Social Charter mentioned in the Declaration had to take place. If not, the momentum would be lost to the detriment of human rights protection in Europe.

Ms O'Loughlin welcomed the strong will expressed by members to push for a roadmap for the implementation of the Reykjavík Declaration.

The Standing Committee **adopted** a declaration on the Reykjavík Summit as amended (see Appendix 2).

11. Observation of elections

Mr Hunko, Chairperson of the Ad hoc committee of the Bureau on the Observation of the early parliamentary elections in Bulgaria (2 April 2023) presented the main conclusions of the Assembly delegation. The latter had assessed that the elections were competitive and well-managed; the numerous contestants were able to campaign freely; fundamental freedoms were respected and enabled the voters to make a free choice. The late and frequent changes of the electoral law were concerning. An evaluation of the different voting methods (including paper ballot and voting machine) was necessary. One of most serious concerns raised by the Assembly delegation was the inadequate protection of vote secrecy which should be seriously considered for the organisation of future elections. The repetition of early elections and frequent legal changes clearly undermined people's trust in the political and democratic institutions. It also damaged the ability of the country to address people's urgent and essential needs. The two leading

coalitions had reached an agreement, which meant that Bulgaria could be expected to have a government and possibly avoid a sixth round of elections in 2023.

Mr Pocij noted that while the constant repetition of elections was worrying, it remained in the frame of democracy.

While agreeing, **Mr Hunko** reiterated that the repetition of early elections and frequent legal changes led to distrust amongst the public.

The President said that the Chairperson of the Bulgarian delegation apologised for not being able to attend the Standing Committee meeting.

The Standing Committee **took note** of the report of the Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau on the Observation of the early parliamentary elections in Bulgaria.

12. Exchange of views with Mr Carlo Monticelli, Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank

The President welcomed **Mr Carlo Monticelli**, Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB).

Mr Monticelli recalled that the CEB was the oldest multilateral development bank in Europe, and the only one in the world with an exclusively social mandate. Today, its membership included 42 countries and Ukraine was about to finalise its accession. The CEB stood ready to continue providing effective support for displaced persons and refugees, in particular those who had fled Ukraine, thereby providing material follow-up to the Assembly Resolution 2487 (2023) "European solidarity in the context of asylum and international protection". The CEB raised funds in international capital markets on very favourable terms which was passed on to its borrowers, thus benefitting governments, local and regional authorities, non-profit organisations and, ultimately, the users of social services. It approved all its projects according to strict sustainability criteria and focused on meeting the needs of the most vulnerable people. The CEB upheld the core values of the Council of Europe across all its activities and maintained strong ties with its parent institution. In 2022, it had achieved extraordinary results on three critical fronts: support to member countries that host refugees from Ukraine; a new Strategic Framework; a capital increase which provided for an injection of fresh resources from shareholders. The CEB continued to support member countries in addressing urgent needs. In this context, Mr Monticelli referred to the important financial resources mobilised following the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye. The Bank was committed to work with member States, with the twin objectives of invigorating social cohesion and ensuring that no one was left behind, objectives which were essential for democracy, prosperity and peace.

Mr Howell wondered whether the CEB would be interested in funding projects targeted at asylum seekers.

Mr Daems asked whether the CEB would consider including in its strategy an element that would approach the social cohesion through the lens of youth. He also asked how the CEB considered environmental issues in its activities and whether it used social impact bonds, including environmental impact bonds.

Mr Yıldız warmly thanked the CEB for its support after the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye.

Mr Monticelli said that asylum seekers fell within the mandate of the CEB. They needed shelter and health assistance which the CEB could finance for by increasing service providing capacities at national level. The CEB was fully aware of the challenges posed by the climate change. To avoid overlaps, the climate issue and the environmental impact bonds should be dealt with by the European Investment Bank. The CEB's approach was that ecological transition had to be just and protect the most vulnerable.

Ms Mezentseva informed the Standing Committee that President Zelenski had just submitted a proposal to the parliament to ratify the full engagement of Ukraine into the CEB. The voting in the Parliament was upcoming. She thanked the CEB for its support to Ukraine and CEB member States for making it possible for the country to accede to the Bank at no cost.

Mr Monticelli welcomed this news and looked forward to meeting Ukrainian representatives at the CEB's Joint meeting.

Mr Zingeris wondered how the CEB board was discussing issues around Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, in particular the issue of deported Ukrainian children.

Mr Cottier asked whether sufficient prevention work was being done in relation to environmental issues.

Mr Monticelli said that the CEB could finance projects related to the issue of deported children. The Court of Justice's decision could provide elements for possible projects in this field. Prevention was one of the areas where the CEB was

working, including prevention of disaster caused by earthquakes. As any bank, the CEB depended on the priorities defined by its shareholders.

13. Current affairs debate on “Excluding athletes from Russia and Belarus from taking part in the Olympics”

The President opened the debate and welcomed **Mr Kaspars Cipruss**, Secretary General of the Latvian Basketball Federation.

Referring to the fundamental principles of Olympism enshrined in the Olympic Charter, **Mr Saar** recalled that “the goal of Olympism is to place sport at the service of the harmonious development of humankind, with a view to promoting a peaceful society concerned with the preservation of human dignity”. Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine was an undisputable breach of this principle. Russia had already misused the Olympic tools during its invasion of Georgia in 2008 (Summer Olympics, Beijing) and during its invasion of Crimea in 2014 (Winter Olympics, Sochi). It was about time to act and to ensure that aggressors have no place in the Olympic Movement. Allowing athletes from aggressor States to step on the Olympic stadium arguing they are “just” athletes and “that sports have nothing to do with politics” would mean turning a blind eye to crime and injustice and could not be accepted. Mr Saar drew attention to the considerable temptation for aggressor States to use the Games as propaganda, as well as to the high risk which the Russian and Belarus athletes and their families would be exposed to, should their participation be allowed. He recalled the firm conviction of all members who had intervened at the hearing held by the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media during the April part-session: the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes in the Olympic Games in the current context was unthinkable, would certainly be used as propaganda and would *de facto* prevent other athletes, not least the Ukrainian athletes, from participating in the Games. The power of sports in promoting values should not be underestimated. Welcoming the decision to hold an urgent debate on the issue during the June part-session, Mr Saar called on the Assembly to take a clear stand.

Stressing the pain and suffering caused by Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, **Mr Cipruss** gave a personal account of how he helped a Ukrainian friend to get to safety. In addition to individual initiatives, public organisations, and state institutions in Latvia and throughout Europe, as well as the Latvian Basketball Union and the entire basketball community had shown solidarity with the victims. Together with the Scandinavian and Baltic countries as well as Poland, a strong alliance had been created to have a stronger voice in the international sport arena and to ensure that aggressor countries have no place in sports. The emergence of a more tolerant policy regarding the participation of Russian citizens in sports competitions, including at the level of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) where there had been calls to respect the human rights of Russian and Belarusian athletes, and where it had been argued that sports should not be mixed with politics, was unacceptable. In authoritarian regimes like in Russia and Belarus, the use of sports and athletes for political purposes, both in domestic and foreign policy, was a daily occurrence. Most sports’ organisations and athletes in those countries depended on State funding. Sports’ stars – only a small number of which had publicly condemned the war - were authority figures for many, especially young people. The international community, in addition to providing financial and material support to Ukraine and its armed forces, had to send a clear signal not only to governments, but also to society and athletes, that brutal military aggression was unacceptable. Any compromise would be perceived by Russia as a sign of international community coming to terms with “political reality” of military aggression. He called for solidarity with the Ukrainian people and a ban on the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes in international sport competitions.

Mr Pocij stressed that for Russia and Belarus there was no stronger message than excluding their athletes from the Olympics. Subjecting athletes’ participation to the signature of a declaration of neutrality was not the way to go and would simply put them in danger. Should Russian and Belarus athletes be allowed to participate in the Games, he believed France and the IOC would face a boycott.

Ms Kravchuk noted that there was no such thing as the “right to go to Olympics”, especially when Ukrainians were facing death, an infringement of their basic right to life daily. There could be no neutrality in sports. Should the Russian athletes be allowed to participate, and should they win, they would become perfect tools for Russian propaganda.

Mr Howell strongly supported the line of exclusion. The IOC’s wish to participate in a peace-building effort by allowing the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes was a fiction. Athletes were funded by their States, and it was impossible to make a distinction between athletic and political abilities.

Recalling the details of the IOC decision, **Mr Katrougalos** argued that the IOC position corresponded to the necessity of showing solidarity with Ukraine and condemning the war of aggression. It was also in the spirit of athleticism as a means for bringing people together. It was crucial to have a united front on this issue.

Ms Kalniņa-Lukaševica thought that it would be immoral to allow Russian athletes – many of whom are active soldiers in the army – to participate in the Olympics while hundreds of Ukrainian athletes cannot because they are either dead or wounded.

Mr Zingeris joined his voice to those opposing the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes. The error committed in 1938 when the Nazi Germany had been allowed to participate in the Olympic Games should not be repeated.

Mr Kiljunen agreed that sport played a huge role in politics, especially in countries like Russia. Three things needed to be analysed for the upcoming urgent debate: how to reconcile exclusion of athletes with the rule of law according to which collective punishment is prohibited?; in the last 25 years, have there been other situations where the UN Charter has been violated and how has the international community reacted to it?; what is the situation of athletes from countries where the human rights situation is dire, such as Equatorial Guinea, Saudi Arabia and North Korea.

Mr Stier was convinced that individual athletes' success would be used as war propaganda by the leadership of the countries concerned. Excluding these athletes was not discrimination but a consequence of the sanctions imposed on the aggressor countries.

Ms Hemmen said that it was morally untenable to allow the athletes of the aggressor countries to participate in Olympics.

Ms Gardini stressed the complexity of the issue and thought that there was no absolute truth. She also referred to the decision of the Italian Olympic Committee to sign up to the IOC guidelines on neutral participation.

Mr Cipruss reiterated his position against the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes.

Mr Saar noted that the discussion had provided useful elements for the upcoming urgent debate. There was no fundamental right to participate in sports at the highest level. Sports could not be separated from politics and always promoted a country. In addition, in authoritarian countries like Russia and Belarus, it was driven by the regime. The mistakes of 2008 and 2014 should not be repeated.

14. Other business

N.A.

15. Next meeting

The Standing Committee **decided** to hold its next meeting in Vaduz (Liechtenstein), on 28 November 2023.

The President expressed his gratitude to everyone who made the meeting possible and gave his sincere thanks to the Latvian delegation, especially to its Chairperson, Ms Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica, for their warm welcome and hospitality in Latvia.

The President closed the meeting at 16:30.

APPENDIX 1

References and transmissions to committees

1. The need to designate the Russian “Wagner Group” as a terrorist organisation**Doc. 15720****Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Markus Wiechel and other members of the Assembly**

Transmission to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *to be taken into account in the framework of the report on “Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine”* and to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for information*

2. Strengthening the protection of biodiversity in Europe through sustainable and fair financing of the Bern Convention**Doc. 15727****Motion for a resolution tabled by Ms Liliana Tanguy and other members of the Assembly**

Transmission to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for consultation*

3. Commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine**Doc. 15728****Motion for a resolution tabled by Ms Mariia Mezentseva and other members of the Assembly**

Reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report* and transmission to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy and to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for information*

4. Promoting universal health coverage**Doc. 15729****Motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development**

Reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report*

5. Support for the reconstruction of Ukraine**Doc. 15732****Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Lulzim Basha and other members of the Assembly**

Reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *to be taken into account in the framework of the report on “Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine”*

6. Overcoming age-based discrimination against older persons**Doc. 15735****Motion for a resolution tabled by the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination**

Reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*

7. Call for a change on rules relating to gender quota**Doc. 15749****Motion for a resolution tabled by Ms Nicole Höchst and other members of the Assembly**

Transmission to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs *to be taken into account in the framework of the report on “Modification of various provisions of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure”* and to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for information*

8. Protecting human rights in and through sport: obligations and shared responsibilities**Doc. 15750****Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Kim Valentin and other members of the Assembly**

Reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report*

- 9. Investigation into the illegal surveillance of foreign leaders, political opponents and activists in Poland**
Doc. 15751
Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Krzysztof Śmiszek and other members of the Assembly

Transmission to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *to be taken into account in the framework of the report on "Pegasus and similar spyware and secret state surveillance"* and to the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) *for information*

- 10. Budgets and priorities of the Council of Europe for the period 2024-2027**
Terms of reference of the committee

Reference to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs *for report*

- 11. Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the biennium 2024-2025**
Terms of reference of the committee

Reference to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs *for report*

B. REPLY AFTER CONSULTATION

- 1. The foreseeable wealth gap in the automated future**
Doc. 15701
Motion for a resolution tabled by Mr Björn Leví Gunnarsson and other members of the Assembly

Reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for taking into account within the framework of the preparation of its report on "Safeguarding future rights for future generations"*

APPENDIX 2

Declaration on The Reykjavik Summit: a strong message of unity, common purpose and unwavering resolve to be followed up by action

1. Meeting today in Riga as the Standing Committee, the Parliamentary Assembly welcomes the [Reykjavik Declaration “United around our values”](#) adopted by the Heads of State and Government at the 4th Council of Europe Summit (Reykjavik, 16 - 17 May 2023), as a strong message of unity, common purpose and unwavering resolve. The Declaration reflects the key concerns and proposals set out in Assembly [recommendation 2245 \(2023\) “The Reykjavik Summit of the Council of Europe – United around values in the face of extraordinary challenges”](#).
2. With the Reykjavik Declaration, the Heads of State and Government have provided a new direction for the Council of Europe in the years to come. As a statutory organ of the Council of Europe, the Assembly stands ready to translate the Summit vision into concrete results, through its parliamentary deliberations, its monitoring procedure, its inter-parliamentary co-operation activities and networks, and its interaction with the Committee of Ministers and the Secretary General.
3. Standing with Ukraine for as long as it takes, the Assembly will spare no effort to support the reconstruction and democratic resilience of Ukraine, being convinced that well-functioning democratic institutions, respect for the rule of law and compliance with democratic standards together with stronger European integration are the best guarantees for the democratic security of Ukraine and Europe.
4. Recalling that there cannot be lasting peace without accountability, the Assembly welcomes the establishment of an [Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine](#), as a first component of a future international compensation mechanism, and encourages other countries to add their names to those of the 45 member and observer states, and the European Union, which have already joined it or declared their intention to do so.
5. At the same time, the Assembly will resolutely pursue its efforts to ensure that the political and military leadership of the Russian Federation is held to account for its war of aggression against Ukraine, supporting the urgent establishment of a special tribunal for the crime of aggression and calling for the Council of Europe to be a part of relevant consultations and negotiations, providing its expert and technical support. It calls for justice for the victims of war crimes, human rights and humanitarian law violations and for the creation of viable mechanisms to ensure the return of abducted persons, including children, back home.
6. Following up the Reykjavik Declaration, the Assembly will strive to preserve the role of the Council of Europe as a beacon of human rights protection, by promoting compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights, protecting the authority of the Court, and ensuring the swift and satisfactory execution of its judgements; and by promoting the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights without any further delay.
7. Welcoming the Reykjavik Process, and reaffirming once more its belief that the right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is a fundamental human right which should be enshrined in domestic and international law, the Assembly will contribute actively to the standard-setting work of the Council of Europe in the environmental field. It will also continue to support the Organisation’s work to shape human rights protection in the digital age and to address other emerging societal challenges from a human rights perspective.
8. Convinced of the urgent need to prevent and resist democratic backsliding, the Assembly will continue to support member states in tackling its root causes, placing greater emphasis on promoting equality and protecting social rights. It will endorse, promote and further develop the Reykjavik Principles of Democracy. The Assembly will strengthen its initiatives to prevent and counter foreign interference with democratic processes, to enhance the integrity of elections, and to promote media freedom and freedom of expression. It will also step up its engagement with civil society and mainstream a youth perspective in its work, as well as continue promoting and protecting the rights of persons belonging to national minorities.
9. As the body representing the national parliaments of all member States, the Assembly stands ready to engage in the Council of Europe High-level Dialogue with member States and partners on the Reykjavik Principles of Democracy. It will also play its part beyond Council of Europe membership, strengthening relations with parliamentary bodies and other international organisations, further consolidating dialogue and co-operation with Belarusian democratic forces and civil society, and identifying channels and means to strengthen dialogue with Russian democratic forces and civil society who share Council of Europe values.

10. The Assembly calls on all its members, representing national parliaments of the 46 member States, to commit to ensuring that the Reykjavik Declaration finds its expression in action at the national level, through holding governments to account on the commitments made at the Summit, supporting the necessary legislative changes and ratifications, and ensuring and mobilizing the level of budgetary resources commensurate with the mandate and tasks given to the Organisation in Reykjavik.

11. Finally, the Assembly expresses its appreciation for the climate of constructive dialogue with which it co-operated with the Committee of Ministers, the Secretary General and other Council of Europe bodies in the lead-up to the Summit and looks forward to pursuing this approach in its follow-up, including through the Joint Committee. It also supports holding regular Summits of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe to provide overarching direction and political momentum to the Organisation.

APPENDIX 3**List of participants / Liste des participants****President of the Parliamentary Assembly / Président de l'Assemblée parlementaire**

Mr Tiny KOX Netherlands / Pays-Bas

Chairpersons of Political Groups / Présidents des groupes politiques

Mr Aleksander POCIEJ Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) /
Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)
Mr George KATROUGALOS Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) /
Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)

Vice-Presidents of the Assembly / Vice-président·e-s de l'Assemblée

Ms Edite ESTRELA Portugal
Ms Ingjerd SCHOU Norway / Norvège
Mr John HOWELL United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
M. Bertrand BOUYX France
Mr Ahmet YILDIZ Türkiye
Ms Sibel ARSLAN Switzerland / Suisse
Ms Elvira KOVÁCS Serbia / Serbie
Ms Maja VUKIĆEVIĆ Montenegro / Monténégro
Ms Elisabetta GARDINI Italy / Italie

Chairpersons of National Delegations / Président·e-s de délégations nationales

Mr Samad SEYIDOV Azerbaijan / Azerbaïdjan
Mr Rik DAEMS Belgium / Belgique
Ms Marijana BALIĆ Croatia / Croatie

Mr Nicos TORNARITIS Cyprus / Chypre
Mr Kimmo KILJUNEN Finland / Finlande

M. Bertrand BOUYX France
Mr Zsolt NÉMETH Hungary / Hongrie
Mr Bjarni JÓNSSON Iceland / Islande
Ms Fiona O'LOUGHLIN Ireland / Irlande
Ms Elisabetta GARDINI Italy / Italie
Ms Franziska HOOP Liechtenstein
Ms Zanda KALNIŅA-LUKAŠEVICA Latvia / Lettonie
Ms Maja VUKIĆEVIĆ Montenegro / Monténégro
Ms Ingjerd SCHOU Norway / Norvège
Ms Petra STIENEN Netherlands / Pays-Bas
Ms Edite ESTRELA Portugal
M. Damien COTTIER Switzerland / Suisse
Mr Ahmet YILDIZ Türkiye
Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA Ukraine
Mr John HOWELL United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni

**Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Human Rights /
Président de la Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie**

Mr Zsolt NÉMETH Hungary / Hongrie

**Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights /
Président de la Commission des questions juridiques et des droits de l'homme**

M. Damien COTTIER Switzerland / Suisse

**Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media /
Présidente de la Commission de la culture, de la science, de l'éducation et des médias**
Ms Yevheniia KRAVCHUK Ukraine

**Chairperson of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination /
Présidente de la Commission sur l'égalité et la non-discrimination**
Ms Mariia MEZENTSEVA Ukraine

**Chairperson of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs /
Présidente de la Commission du Règlement, des immunités et des affaires institutionnelles**
Mme Marie-Christine DALLOZ France

**Chairperson of the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights /
Président de la Commission sur l'élection des juges à la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme**
Mr Titus CORLĂȚEAN Romania / Roumanie

Ex-officio members of the Bureau / Membres ex-officio du Bureau

Ms Zanda KALNIŅA-LUKAŠEVICA Latvia / Lettonie
Mr Bjarni JÓNSSON Iceland / Islande
Ms Franziska HOOP Liechtenstein

Other members of the Parliamentary Assembly / Autres membres de l'Assemblée parlementaire

Mr Davor Ivo STIER Croatia / Croatie
Mr Alexander RYLE Denmark / Danemark
Mr Indrek SAAR Estonia / Estonie
Mr Andrej HUNKO Germany / Allemagne
Ms Cécile HEMMEN Luxembourg

Other delegation / Autre délégation

Mr Besnik TAHIRI Assembly of Kosovo* / Assemblée du Kosovo*

Invited personalities / Personnalités invitées

Mr Edvards SMILTĒNS Speaker of the Saeima / Président de la Saeima
Mr Edgars RINKĒVIČS Minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia / ministre des Affaires étrangères de la Lettonie
Ms Aoife NOLAN President of the European Committee of Social Rights / Présidente du Comité européen des droits sociaux
Mr Carlo MONTICELLI Governor of the Council of Europe Development Bank / Gouverneur de la Banque de développement du Conseil de l'Europe
Mr Kaspars CIPRUSS Secretary General of the Latvian Basketball Federation / Secrétaire Général de la Fédération lettone de basket-ball

Secretaries of Political Groups / Secrétaires des groupes politiques

Ms Francesca ARBOGAST SOC
Ms Denise O'HARA EPP/CD / PPE/DC
Ms Maria BIGDAY ALDE / ADLE
Ms Anna KOLOTOVA UEL / GUE

*All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo / Toute référence au Kosovo, que ce soit à son territoire, à ses institutions ou à sa population, doit se comprendre en pleine conformité avec la Résolution 1244 du Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies et sans préjuger du statut du Kosovo.

Secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly / Secrétariat de l'Assemblée parlementaire

Ms Despina CHATZIVASSILIOU	Secretary General / Secrétaire Générale
Ms Louise BARTON	Director of Committees - Human Dignity and Sustainable Development / Directrice des commissions - Dignité humaine et développement durable
Mme Valérie CLAMER	Head of the Table Office, Information Technologies and Events Department / Cheffe du service de la Séance, des technologies de l'information et des événements
Mr Sergey KHRYCHIKOV	Head of the Private Office of the President of the Assembly / Chef du Cabinet du Président de l'Assemblée
Mme Isild HEURTIN	Head of the Secretariat of the Bureau of the Assembly / Cheffe du Secrétariat du Bureau de l'Assemblée
Mr Francesc FERRER	Head of the Communication Division / Chef de la Division de la communication
Ms Liri KOPACI-DI-MICHELE	Head of the Inter-Parliamentary Co-operation and Parliamentary Projects Support Division / Cheffe de la Division de la coopération interparlementaire et de soutien des projets parlementaires
Ms Aysegül ELVERİŞ	Deputy Head of the Table Office, Information Technologies and Events Department / Cheffe adjointe du Service de la Séance, des technologies de l'information et des événements
Mme Rachel MOREL	Principal administrative assistant of the Table Office / Assistante administrative principale du Service de la Séance
Mme Martine MEYER	Administrative assistant of the Standing Committee / Assistante administrative de la Commission permanente
Mme Anne GAREL	Assistant of the Bureau / Assistante du Bureau