

Information documents

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31 January 2024

Communication by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly at the 1487th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies¹ (30 January 2024)

¹ This document covers the activities of the Assembly since the meeting of the Bureau on 22 January 2024 and future activities up to the meeting of the Bureau on 7 March 2024 (Paris).

I. First part of the Ordinary Session of 2024 (22 - 26 January 2024)

A. Assembly's response to the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine

On Thursday 25 January 2024, following an urgent debate, the Assembly unanimously adopted a Resolution based on the report by Olena Khomenko (Ukraine, EC/DA) underscoring the urgent need to address the situation and fate of Ukrainian children forcibly transferred and deported to the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, and Belarus. As of today, the Ukrainian Government's "Children of War" platform has collected information on more than 19,546 children reported as deported or forcibly transferred from various locations, only 388 of whom have returned home, the Resolution states. The adopted text reiterates that all Ukrainian children have the right to enjoy the rights and freedoms enshrined in relevant international human rights instruments and emphasised that the best interests of the child must prevail in all decision-making processes concerning them, reinforcing the principle that children should never be used as a means of exerting pressure or as war trophies. The Assembly, therefore, called on national parliaments to adopt resolutions recognising these crimes as genocide, and the international community to collaborate with Ukraine to trace and repatriate missing children, namely to identify, locate and return them to Ukraine.

Finally, PACE reiterated its commitment to continuing its role as a facilitator to support the Ukrainian authorities and various international organisations in determining the most rapid means to identify and facilitate an effective search for children with access to as much information as possible about their identity and the conditions of their deportation or forcible transfer by the Russian Federation. Addressing the Assembly in the framework of this debate, Ukraine's First Lady Olena Zelenska asked national parliaments to join in order to force Russia to comply with at least the Geneva Conventions and immediately provide comprehensive lists with the names and whereabouts of all Ukrainian children who have been illegally deported. "Every rescued child is a special operation involving many countries and dozens of people who care. That's how we succeed. And there are dozens of caring countries and millions of caring people in the world. At least I believe in this", she added.

B. Follow-up to the Reykjavik Summit

Over the session week, the Assembly continued to discuss the follow-up to the Reykjavik Summit and to contribute concretely to its implementation. In this context, the President of the Assembly had a first exchange of views with the new Chairpersons of committees on how to better contribute to the implementation of the Reykjavik Declaration in their work, which continued during the Bureau meeting on Friday. In terms of concrete follow-up, this week, in adopting Resolution 2530 (2024) "A democratic future for Belarus", the Assembly set out wide-ranging proposals to build a democratic future for Belarus – including a new set of measures to support Belarusian democratic forces led by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, who also addressed the Assembly. In particular, the Assembly voted to create a representative delegation of Belarusian democratic forces which would be able to take part in the work of its committees and networks and decided to appoint a General Rapporteur for a Democratic Belarus.

Moreover, in adopting [Resolution 2534 \(2024\)](#) on The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (January-December 2023), the Assembly acknowledged the efforts by the Monitoring Committee, including by the high-level exchange of views that took place during its meeting on 4 December 2023 in Rome, with regard to the implementation of the Reykjavik Declaration and especially to strengthen its capacity in terms of early warning, in line with the conclusions of the 2023 Council of Europe Summit and to give consideration to mechanisms to ensure that due account is taken of such early warnings, as decided by the Assembly in Resolution 2515 (2023). In that context, the Assembly invited the committee to continue its reflections on mechanisms to strengthen its reactivity and ability to quickly respond to developments in member States that are not under a full monitoring procedure, engaged in a post-monitoring dialogue or subject to periodic review of their obligations to the Council of Europe.

C. Election of the President of the Assembly

At the opening of the part-session, on Monday 22 January, the Assembly elected by acclamation Mr Theodoros Rousopoulos (Greece, EPP/CD) as President of the Assembly.

D. Election of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly

On 22 January 2024, the Assembly elected its Vice-Presidents (Appendix 1).

E. Election of Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of the Committees of the Assembly

The Assembly Committees elected their Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons (Appendix 2).

F. Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights

On 23 January 2024, the Assembly elected Mr [Gediminas Sagatys](#) and Mr [Stéphane Pisani](#) as judges to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of respectively Lithuania and Luxembourg.

On 24 January 2024, the Assembly elected Ms [Diana Petrova Kovacheva](#) as judge to the European Court of Human Rights in respect of Bulgaria.

G. Election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights

On 24 January 2024, [Mr Michael O'Flaherty](#) was elected Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights by the Parliamentary Assembly. He will serve a non-renewable term of six years starting on 1 April 2024.

H. Personalities

The following personalities addressed the Assembly (in chronological order):

- Ms Dunja MIJATOVIĆ, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights
- His Excellency Mr Nikos CHRISTODOULIDES, President of the Republic of Cyprus
- His Excellency Mr Jakov MILATOVIĆ, President of Montenegro
- Mr Daniel RISCH, Prime Minister of Liechtenstein
- Mr Mathias CORMANN, Secretary-General of the OECD
- Ms Olena Volodymyrivna ZELENSKA, First Lady of Ukraine (online)
- Ms Dominique HASLER, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Education, and Sport of Liechtenstein and President of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
- Ms Marija PEJČINOVIĆ BURIĆ, Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Ms Sviatlana TSIKHANOUSKAYA, Leader of the Belarusian democratic forces

Their speeches can be found on the web site of the Assembly: <https://pace.coe.int>.

I. Debate under urgent procedure

The Assembly held a debate under urgent procedure on the *Situation of the children of Ukraine* on the basis of a report by the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development and an opinion by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons.

J. Media coverage

The media coverage of the first part-session 2024 was outstanding. With 82 journalists accredited, there were more than 500 articles (provisional figures) in the international and key national print and electronic media, the second highest figure in the last two years. Their geographic distribution very well reflected the PACE agenda, with strong coverage found in Ukraine, Serbia and Azerbaijan, and in many relevant international media.

The statement by Olena Volodymyrivna Zelenska, First Lady of Ukraine, was reflected in several TV networks and the debate that followed - on the situation of the children of Ukraine - was widely covered in the country. In addition to that item, the challenge of the credentials of the parliamentary delegation of Azerbaijan was given much prominence in the region's media, as was the election of Theodoros Rousopoulos as the new PACE President and the visit of the Presidents of Cyprus and Montenegro in their respective countries. Other items widely covered were the report on the recent observation of the parliamentary elections in Serbia as well as the election of Michael O'Flaherty as the new Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights.

Over session week, PACE "X" posts received 488k impressions, its Facebook reach totalled just under 8,000, and the Assembly's YouTube videos were viewed around 17,700 times, a record high, amounting to 978 hours of watch time. Top subjects were the challenge of the credentials of the delegation of Azerbaijan, the election of the new Commissioner for Human Rights, and the election of the new PACE President. Increased YouTube views may have reflected more active promotion of the channel via different platforms.

The MediaBox, a web-TV studio available to all those making news at the Assembly, once again proved its usefulness for Assembly members, as a way of raising the institution's profile: 31 interviews with parliamentarians and other participants were recorded.

K. Adopted texts

Further to debates, the Assembly adopted the following texts:

Recommendations

Recommendation 2265 (2024)	Situation of the children of Ukraine (Doc. 15901)
Recommendation 2266 (2024)	A democratic future for Belarus (Doc. 15892)
Recommendation 2267 (2024)	Countering SLAPPs: an imperative for a democratic society (Doc. 15869)
Recommendation 2268 (2024)	Guaranteeing media freedom and the safety of journalists: an obligation of member States (Doc. 15891)
Recommendation 2269 (2024)	Child abuse in institutions in Europe (Doc. 15889)

Resolutions

Resolution 2524 (2024)	Recent developments in the Middle East: Hamas' terrorist attack on Israel and Israel's response (Doc. 15890)
Resolution 2525 (2024)	The theme of migration and asylum in election campaigns and the consequences on the welcoming and rights of migrants (Doc. 15832)
Resolution 2526 (2024)	Globalisation in times of crisis and war: the role of the OECD since the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine (Doc. 15868)

Resolution 2527 (2024)	Challenge, on substantive grounds, of the still unratified credentials of the parliamentary delegation of Azerbaijan (Doc. 15898)
Resolution 2528 (2024)	Allegations of systemic torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in places of detention in Europe (Doc. 15880)
Resolution 2529 (2024)	Situation of the children of Ukraine (Doc. 15901)
Resolution 2530 (2024)	A democratic future for Belarus (Doc. 15892)
Resolution 2531 (2024)	Countering SLAPPs: an imperative for a democratic society (Doc. 15869)
Resolution 2532 (2024)	Guaranteeing media freedom and the safety of journalists: an obligation of member States (Doc. 15891)
Resolution 2533 (2024)	Child abuse in institutions in Europe (Doc. 15889)
Resolution 2534 (2024)	The progress of the Assembly's monitoring procedure (January-December 2023) (Doc. 15893)

These texts can be found on the web site of the Assembly: <https://pace.coe.int>.

II. Hearings and exchanges of views organised during the part-session

Tuesday 23 January 2024	
<p>8:30 – 9:30</p> <p>Room 11, Palais</p> <p>Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy</p>	<p>► Hearing on <i>Support for the reconstruction of Ukraine</i> in the framework of a report prepared by Mr Lulzim Basha (Albania, EPP/CD), with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Cedric Ryngaert, Professor of Public International Law at Utrecht University, the Netherlands - Mr Philip Zelikow, White Burkett Miller Professor of History, University of Virginia, and former Advisor of the US Department of State (2005-2007) (online)
<p>9:30 – 10:30</p> <p>Room 11, Palais</p> <p>Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy</p>	<p>► Hearing in the framework of the preparation of the <i>Statutory Opinion on the application for membership set out in the letter of 12 May 2022 addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, in line with Statutory Resolution (51) 30</i>, by Ms Dora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD), with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Glauk Konjufca, President of the Assembly of Kosovo*
<p>8:30 – 9:30</p> <p>Room 7, Palais</p> <p>Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media</p>	<p>► Exchange of views on <i>Propaganda and freedom of information in Europe</i>, in the context of a report prepared by Ms Tonia Antoniazzi (United Kingdom, SOC), with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Veronika Bilkova, Vice-President of the Venice Commission, Head of the Department of International Law, Faculty of Law of the Charles University, Czech Republic
<p>11:30 – 12:30</p> <p>Room 9, Palais</p> <p>Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee)</p> <p>and</p> <p>Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination</p>	<p>► Joint Hearing on <i>National minorities in Ukraine: amendments to the Law on national minorities (communities)</i>, [in private²], with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Olga Stefanichyna, Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, Ukraine (online) - Ms Veronika Bílková, member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) in respect of Czechia, Vice-President of the Venice Commission and one of the rapporteurs on the opinion to the Law on national minorities (communities) - Mr Ashot Avanesyan, Chair of the Council of national communities of Ukraine (online)

* 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.

² According to Rule 48.3 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly.

<p>12:45 – 14:00</p> <p>Room 8, Palais</p> <p>PACE Elections Division</p>	<p>► Annual meeting on <i>Election Observation</i> with the participation of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Louise Barton, Director of Committees, Human Dignity and Sustainable Development to the Council of Europe - Ambassador Svetlana Geleva, Permanent Representative of North Macedonia, Chair of the Committee of Ministers Rapporteurs Group on Democracy (GR-DEM) - Mr Tiny Kox, former President of the Parliamentary Assembly, rapporteur of the Bureau's progress report on PACE Election Observation activities in 2023
<p>13:00 – 14:00</p> <p>Room 11, Palais</p> <p>Women@PACE group in cooperation with the Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence</p>	<p>Exchange of views on <i>EmpowerHer: driving change in women's empowerment</i>, with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Pap Ndiaye, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe - Ms Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the Council of Europe - Ms Tanja Gonggrijp, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Council of Europe <p>Moderated by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Elena Bonetti (Italy, ALDE), member of the Bureau of the Women@PACE group - Ms Etilda Gjonaj (Albania, SOC), PACE General Rapporteur on violence against women
<p>Wednesday 24 January 2024</p>	
<p>11:00 – 12:00</p> <p>Room 6, Palais</p> <p>Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights</p>	<p>► Exchange of views on <i>Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine</i>, in the context of a report by Mr Davor Ivo Stier (Croatia, EPP/CD), with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Markiyan Kliuchkovskiy, Executive Director, Register of Damage for Ukraine, The Hague, Netherlands
<p>11:30 – 12:30</p> <p>Room 9, Palais</p> <p>Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media and</p>	<p>► Joint Hearing on <i>Countering the erasure of cultural identity in war and peace</i>, in the context of a report prepared by Ms Yevheniia Kravchuk (Ukraine, ALDE), with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Alena Makouskaya, Representative of the Council of Europe Contact Group on co-operation with Representatives of Belarusian democratic forces - Ms Yuliia Fediv, Culture and media manager, member of the NGO "Coalition for Culture", UNESCO and EU Commission consultant on cultural policymaking reform in Ukraine

<p>Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy</p> <p>and</p> <p>Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Robert Pickard, lawyer and cultural heritage expert, United Kingdom (online)
<p>12:45 – 13:45</p> <p>Room 7, Palais</p> <p>Network of Contact Parliamentarians for a healthy environment</p>	<p>► Exchange of views on <i>Ecocide: recent developments and challenges for anchoring it in national, European and international law</i>, in the context of the Committee's contribution to the work by PC-ENV on the new Council of Europe Convention on the protection of the environment through criminal law, with the participation of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Jojo Mehta, co-founder and Executive Director of Stop Ecocide International (SEI)
<p>13:15 – 14:00</p> <p>Room 8, Palais</p> <p>Parliamentary Network Women Free from Violence</p>	<p>► Exchange of views on <i>Reflecting on progress: a decade of implementing the Istanbul Convention in Europe</i>, with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Aleid Van Den Brink, First Vice-President of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO).
<p>Thursday 25 January 2024</p>	
<p>8:30 – 9:45</p> <p>Room 7, Palais</p> <p>Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media</p>	<p>► Exchange of views on <i>Priorities of the committee in 2024</i>, with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ms Tamar Taliashvili, Permanent Representative of Georgia, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment (GR-C)
<p>14:00 – 15:00</p> <p>Room 8, Palais</p> <p>Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights</p>	<p>► Hearing on <i>Abolition of the death penalty: current global trends and situation in the United States of America</i>, in the context of the mandate of the General Rapporteur on the abolition of the death penalty, Mr Aleksandar Nikoloski (North Macedonia, EPP/CD), with the participation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mr Raphaël Chenuil-Hazan, Director general, Ensemble contre la peine de mort (ECPM), Paris - Ms Robin Maher, Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center (DPI), Washington (online)

	-Ms Bronwyn Dudley, Program Manager, World Coalition Against the Death Penalty, Paris
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III. Decisions taken by the Bureau (22 January and 26 January 2024)

The Bureau of the Assembly, meeting on Monday 22 January 2024, in Strasbourg:

– **Communications:** took note of the communications by the President of the Assembly, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe;

– **First part-session of 2024 (Strasbourg, 22-26 January):**

o Request for a debate under urgent procedure: took note of the request to hold a debate on *The situation of the children of Ukraine*, tabled by the leaders of political groups, decided to recommend to the Assembly to hold this debate, and to refer the matter to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development for report and to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons for opinion;

o Draft agenda: updated the draft agenda of the part-session;

o Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights: took note of the report drawn up by the Committee on the election of judges for the post of judges in respect of Serbia, Luxembourg, Bulgaria and Lithuania, subject to ratification by the Assembly in the Progress report;

o Joint Committee (Strasbourg, 25 January 2024): prepared the meeting of the Joint Committee;

– **Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the Standing Committee (13 October 2023 to 22 January 2024):** approved the Progress report;

– **References and transmissions to committees:** approved the references and transmissions, subject to ratification by the Assembly through the Progress report;

– **Election observation:**

o Serbia: early parliamentary elections (17 December 2023): approved the [report](#) by the observation mission;

o Azerbaijan: early presidential election (7 February 2024): regretted that the Azerbaijani authorities have failed to invite the Assembly to observe this election, despite their obligation to do so as a member State under monitoring procedure; and took note that the Assembly will therefore not observe this election and that none of its members or bodies have been mandated to observe or comment on this electoral process on behalf of the PACE;

o North Macedonia: Presidential and parliamentary elections (24 April and 8 May 2024 - tbc): subject to receiving an invitation, decided to observe these elections and to set up an ad hoc committee composed of 20 members (SOC-6; EPP/CD-6 ; ALDE-4; EC/DA-3; UEL-1), as well as the two co-rapporteurs of the monitoring committee, and to conduct a pre-electoral mission;

o Election Observation activities of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2023: took note of the report;

– **Vice-Presidents of the Assembly for 2024:** took note of the list of candidates for Vice-Presidents of the Assembly (appendix 1);

– **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize:** took note of the [press release](#) of the launch of the 2024 edition of the Prize;

– **Issues raised by committees :**

o Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media: considered and approved the draft terms of reference of a “General Rapporteur on Governance and Ethics in Sport”;

– **Composition of the Monitoring Committee, the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights:** on the basis of proposals by the political groups, nominated members of these three committees and decided to submit them to the Assembly for ratification;

– **Resolution 1376 (2004) relating to Cyprus:** took note of the letters from the two Turkish Cypriot political parties informing the President of the Assembly of the names of the "elected representatives of the Turkish Cypriot community" entitled to sit in the Assembly in 2024, namely Mr Armağan Candan and Mr Oğuzhan Hasipoğlu, subject to ratification by the Assembly through the Progress report;

– **Resolution 2094 (2016) on the situation in Kosovo* and the role of the Council of Europe:** took note of the letter by the President of the Assembly of Kosovo informing the President of the Assembly of the names of the members of the delegation of the Assembly of Kosovo for the 2024 ordinary session, and approved the list of the delegation, subject to ratification by the Assembly through the Progress report:

Members:

- Ms Saranda Bogujevci, Self-Determination Movement, Head of Delegation
- Mr Arben Gashi, Democratic League of Kosovo
- Mr Enis Kervan, Parliamentary Group “Multiethnic”

Substitutes:

- Ms Ariana Musliu-Shoshi, Democratic Party of Kosovo
- Mr Besnik Tahiri, Alliance for the Future of Kosovo
- Vacant seat

The Bureau of the Assembly, meeting on Friday 26 January 2024, in Strasbourg, as regards:

– **Communication:** took note of the statement by the President of the Assembly;

– **Follow-up to the first part-session of 2024 (Strasbourg, 22-26 January):** approved the follow-up proposals made by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to texts adopted by the Assembly, as set out in Appendix 3;

– **Follow-up to the Reykjavik Summit:** took note of the information provided by the Director of Committees - Human Dignity and Sustainable Development and held an exchange of views;

– **Standing Committee in Paris (7 March 2024):** took note of the preliminary draft agenda;

– **References and transmissions to committees:** approved the references and transmissions, subject to ratification by the Assembly through the Progress report;

– **Elections observation**

o North Macedonia: Presidential and parliamentary elections (24 April and 8 May 2024 - tbc): approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections and appointed Mr Alfred HEER (Switzerland, ALDE) as its Chairperson;

– **Ad hoc committee on The situation of the children of Ukraine:** took note of the minutes of the meeting and decided to declassify this document;

– **Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the Standing Committee (26 January-14 April 2024):** appointed Ms Petra BAYR (Austria, SOC) as rapporteur;

– **Composition of the Monitoring Committee and of the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights**

o Monitoring Committee: on the basis of proposals by

– the EPP/CD Group, nominated Ms Ana TSITLIDZE (Georgia) as a member;
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– the Group EC/DA, nominated Ms Eka SEPASHVILI (Georgia), Ms Ester MIELI (Italy), Mr Graziano PIZZIMENTI (Italy) and Mr Paweł JABŁOŃSKI (Poland) as members;

o Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights: on the basis of proposals by the EPP/CD Group, nominated Mr Pablo HISPÁN (Spain) and Ms Christine PASQUIER-CIULLA (Monaco) as members;

– **Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2024**: approved the proposals (Appendix 4);

– **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) - List of candidates in respect of Albania**: approve the list of candidates in respect of this country to be forwarded to the Committee of Ministers;

– **Meetings elsewhere than Strasbourg and Paris**: authorised

o The Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights to hold a joint meeting with the Panel members in Vienna, on 13 May 2024;

o the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy to hold a meeting in Oslo, on 31-31 May 2024.

V. Future activities of Committees and Networks, and election observation missions

➤ On 4 March 2023, in Paris, the **Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights**:

. will hold a hearing on *Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine* in the context of a report prepared by Mr Davor Ivo Stier (Croatia, EPP/CD), with the participation of invited experts. (Hearing focused on compensation);

. will hold a hearing on *Towards a transparency register within the Parliamentary Assembly*, in the context of a report prepared by: Ms Azadeh Rojhan (Sweden, SOC) with the participation of invited experts.

VI. Fact-finding visits in the framework of the preparation of reports

➤ ***Call for Famagusta's return to its lawful inhabitants***

Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC), rapporteur of the *Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to Cyprus in **February 2024** (subject to the availability of funds).

➤ ***The honouring of obligations and commitments by the Republic of Moldova***

Mr Pierre-Alain Fridez (Switzerland, SOC) and **Ms Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica** (Latvia, EPP/CD), rapporteurs of the *Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee)*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to the Republic of Moldova on **4-7 February 2024**.

➤ ***Post-monitoring dialogue with Bulgaria***

Ms Thórhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC) and **Ms Deborah Bergamini** (Italy, EPP/CD), rapporteurs of the *Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee)*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to Brussels on **12 February 2024**.

➤ ***Ensuring human rights compliant asylum procedures***

Ms Stephanie Krisper (Austria, ALDE), rapporteur of the *Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to Brussels on **12-14 February 2024**.

➤ ***Protecting women human rights defenders and people who defend women's rights in Europe***

Ms Petra Bayr (Austria, SOC), rapporteur of the *Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to Poland on **4- 5 March 2024**.

➤ ***Missing migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers: a call to clarify their fate***

Mr Julian Phalke (Germany, SOC), rapporteur of the *Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to Greece on **5- 7 March 2024**.

➤ ***Immigration, one of the answers to Europe's demographic aging***

Ms Kate Osamor (United Kingdom, SOC), rapporteur of the *Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to Sweden in **2024 (dates to be confirmed)**.

➤ ***Global rules to eliminate all forms of religious oppression***

Ms Arta Bilalli Zendeli (North Macedonia, SOC), rapporteur of the *Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination*, will carry out a fact-finding visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina in **2024 (dates to be confirmed)**.

VII. Online meetings in the framework of the preparation of reports

➤ ***Ensuring human rights compliant asylum procedures***

Ms Stephanie Krisper (Austria, ALDE), rapporteur of the *Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons*, will hold an online meeting with Pr. Marianna Gkliati, Assistant Professor at Tilburg Law School, the Netherlands, and co-drafter of the "Refugee Law Initiative Declaration on Externalisation and Asylum" on **30 January 2024**.

➤ ***Protecting human rights in and through sport: obligations and shared responsibilities***

Mr Kim Valentin (Denmark, ALDE), rapporteur of the *Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media*, will hold an online meeting with the International Olympic Committee's Directors of Human Rights and Gender Equality in **February 2024 (date to be confirmed)**.

VIII. Seminars and conferences to be organised by the Assembly

➤ **24 - 26 January 2024, Strasbourg:** PACE Interparliamentary Co-operation and Project Support Division, in cooperation with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) RADA Next Generation Program, organised a Study visit to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for staff members of the parliamentary committees and structural divisions of the Secretariat of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. This study visit aimed to acquaint participants on processes and ways to include citizens in legislative processes as well as with the functioning of the PACE and other institutional bodies of the Council of Europe.

➤ **20 February 2024, Rabat:** PACE Division of Interparliamentary Cooperation and Project Support is organising, in co-operation with the Moroccan Parliament, the "Launching event of the new web portal of the Chamber of Councillors of the Parliament of Morocco". Thanks to this activity, the Moroccan Parliament will equip itself with a user-friendly new portal in several languages.

➤ **21 February 2024, Rabat:** PACE Division of Interparliamentary Cooperation and Project Support is organising, in co-operation with the Moroccan Parliament, a "Workshop on participatory democracy" which

includes the launching of the new electronic platform on petitions and motions of the House of Representatives of the Moroccan Parliament and the presentation of a study on public consultation written by the international expert David Lowe. The objective of this activity is to promote participatory democracy and allow the Moroccan Parliament to dialogue with civil society on the different modalities of public consultation.

➤ **5 - 6 March 2024, Rabat:** PACE Division of Interparliamentary Cooperation and Project Support is organising, in co-operation with the Venice Commission and the Moroccan Parliament the seminar “The evaluation of laws by the parliamentary institution”. The objective of this event is to allow parliamentarians and officials of the Moroccan Parliament to better understand international standards concerning the quality of laws and legislation, and in particular those of the Venice Commission, and to familiarise themselves with the experience of other countries.

➤ **7 - 8 March 2024, Rabat:** PACE Division of Interparliamentary Cooperation and Project Support is organising, in co-operation with the Moroccan Parliament, the seminar “Petitions and legislative motions: between theory and practice” for staff members of the Moroccan Parliament. The activity aims to complete the training cycle which allowed the Moroccan Parliament to familiarise itself with European good practices in terms of submitting and processing petitions and motions addressed to the parliamentary institution.

IX. Co-operation with the Committee of Ministers

➤ **On 23 January 2024,** Ambassador Svetlana Geleva, Chair of the Committee of Ministers Rapporteurs Group on Democracy (GR-DEM), was invited to take part in an exchange of views on “Council of Europe election activities after the Reykjavik Summit: what perspective for the Parliamentary Assembly?” during the Assembly’s Annual meeting on Election Observation.

➤ **On 23 January 2023,** Mr Pap Ndiaye, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of France to the Council of Europe; Ms Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the Council of Europe; and Ms Tanja Gonggrijp, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Council of Europe, participated in an exchange of views on “EmpowerHer: driving change in women's empowerment”, co-organised by the women@PACE group and the Network of Women Free from Violence.

➤ **On 25 January 2024,** the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media held an exchange of views on *Priorities of the committee in 2024*, with the participation of Ambassador Tamar Taliashvili, Permanent Representative of Georgia, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers' Rapporteur Group on Education, Culture, Sport, Youth and Environment (GR-C).

X. Cooperation with the Venice Commission

➤ **On 23 January 2024,** Ms Veronika Bílková, member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) in respect of the Czech Republic, Vice-President of the Venice Commission, and one of the rapporteurs on the opinion to the Law on national minorities (communities) participated in a hearing on “National minorities in Ukraine: amendments to the Law on national minorities (communities)”, organised jointly by Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination and Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee).

➤ **On 23 January 2024,** the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media held an exchange of views on “Propaganda and freedom of information in Europe”, in the context of a report prepared by Ms Tonia Antoniazzi (United Kingdom, SOC), with the participation of Ms Veronika Bilkova, Vice-President of the Venice Commission, Head of the Department of International Law, Faculty of Law of the Charles University, Czech Republic.

➤ **5 - 6 March 2024, Rabat:** PACE Division of Interparliamentary Cooperation and Project Support is organising, in co-operation with the Venice Commission and the Moroccan Parliament the seminar “The evaluation of laws by the parliamentary institution”. The objective of this event is to allow parliamentarians and officials of the Moroccan Parliament to better understand international standards concerning the quality of laws and legislation, and in particular those of the Venice Commission, and to familiarise themselves with the experience of other countries.

XI. External relations

- Relations with other international partners

➤ **On 24 January 2024**, the *Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy*, enlarged to include the delegations of the national parliaments of the OECD member States that are not members of the Council of Europe and a delegation from the European Parliament, took position on amendments to the report *Globalisation in times of crisis and war: The role of the OECD since the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine* (Rapporteur: Mr George Katrougalos, Greece, UEL, presented by Mr Bertrand Bouyx (France, ALDE), Chairperson of the Committee), followed by the debate in plenary with the participation of Mr Mathias Cormann, Secretary-General of the OECD.

XII. List of meetings of the committees, the Bureau and the Presidential Committee

- . **22 January 2024, Strasbourg:** *Bureau meeting*
- . **25 January 2024, Strasbourg:** *Presidential Committee*
- . **26 January 2024, Vaduz:** *Bureau meeting*
- . **4 March 2024, Paris:** *Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights*
- . **5 March 2024, Paris:** *Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy*
- . **6 March 2024, Paris:** *Monitoring Committee meeting*
- . **7 March 2024, Paris (morning):** *Bureau meeting*
- . **7 March 2024, Paris (afternoon):** *Standing Committee*

Appendix 1 - Vice Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly



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Vice-Presidents of the Parliamentary Assembly Vice-Présidentes et Vice-Présidents de l'Assemblée parlementaire

In order of precedence / par ordre de préséance

Mr Yıldırım Tuğrul TÜRKER	Türkiye
Ms Elisabetta GARDINI	Italy / Italie
Mr Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ	Switzerland / Suisse
Mr Rik DAEMS	Belgium / Belgique
Mr Reinhold LOPATKA	Austria / Autriche
Mr Armin LASCHET	Germany / Allemagne
Mr David MORRIS	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
Ms Bernadeta COMA	Andorra / Andorre
Mr Bertrand BOUYX	France
Mr Marco NICOLINI	San Marino / Saint-Marin
Ms Tamara VONTA	Slovenia / Slovénie
Ms Olena KHOMENKO	Ukraine
Ms Snježana NOVAKOVIĆ BURSAC	Bosnia and Herzegovina / Bosnie-Herzégovine
Ms Agnieszka POMASKA	Poland / Pologne
Ms Blerina GJYLAMETI	Albania / Albanie
Mr Markus WIECHEL	Sweden / Suède
Mr Georg GEORGIEV	Bulgaria / Bulgarie
Vacant seat / siège vacant	Slovak Republic / République slovaque

Appendix 2 - Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees

Chairs and Vice-Chairs of committees Présidences et Vice-présidences de commissions

Committees / Commissions	Chairpersons / Présidents	Vice-Chairpersons / Vice-présidents	
Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy / <i>Commission des questions politiques et de la démocratie</i> 79 seats / sièges	Mr Bertrand BOUYX (France, ALDE)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Mr Emanuelis ZINGERIS (Lithuania, EPP/CD) Mr George PAPANDREOU (Greece, SOC) ZZ... (EC/DA)
Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights / <i>Commission des questions juridiques et des droits de l'homme</i> 79 seats / sièges	Lord Richard KEEN (United Kingdom, EC/DA)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Ms Lesia VASYLENKO (Ukraine, ALDE) Mr Pablo HISPÁN (Spain, EPP/CD) Ms Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR (Iceland, SOC)
Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development / <i>Commission des questions sociales, de la santé et du développement durable</i> 79 seats / sièges	Mr Simon MOUTQUIN (Belgium, SOC)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Ms Danuta JAZŁOWIECKA (Poland, EPP/CD) Mr Armen GEVORGYAN (Armenia, EC/DA) Mr Pedro CEGONHO (Portugal, SOC)
Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons / <i>Commission des migrations, des réfugiés et des personnes déplacées</i> 79 seats / sièges	Mr Oleksii GONCHARENKO (Ukraine, EC/DA)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Ms Kate OSAMOR (United Kingdom, SOC) Mr Emmanuel FERNANDES (France, UEL) Ms Tamara VONTA (Slovenia, ALDE)
Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media / <i>Commission de la culture, de la science, de l'éducation et des médias</i> 79 seats / sièges	Ms Linda Hofstad HELLELAND (Norway, EPP/CD)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Ms Fiona O'LOUGHLIN (Ireland, ALDE) Mr Birgir THÓRARINSSON (Iceland, EPP/CD) Mr Constantinos EFSTATHIOU (Cyprus, SOC)
Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination / <i>Commission sur l'égalité et la non-discrimination</i> 79 seats / sièges	Ms Maria MEZENTSEVA (Ukraine, EPP/CD)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Ms Etilda GJONAJ (Albania, SOC) Mr Caspar van den BERG (Netherlands, ALDE) ZZ... (UEL)
Monitoring Committee / <i>Commission de suivi</i> 85 seats / sièges	ZZ... (EPP/CD)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Mr Mogens JENSEN (Denmark, SOC) Mr Claude KERN (France, ALDE) Mr Arkadiusz MULARCZYK (Poland, EC/DA)
Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs / <i>Commission du Règlement, des immunités et des affaires institutionnelles</i> 32 seats / sièges	Ms Heike ENGELHARDT (Germany, SOC)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	ZZ... (EC/DA) ZZ... (EPP/CD) Ms Hélène LAPORTE, France (EC/DA)
Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights / <i>Commission sur l'élection des juges à la Cour européenne des droits de l'homme</i> 20 seats / sièges	Ms Petra BAYR (Austria, SOC)	1 st /1 ^{er} 2 nd /2 ^e 3 rd /3 ^e	Mr Corneliu Mugurel COZMANCIUC (Romania, EPP/CD) ZZ... (EC/DA) Ms Bijana PANTIĆ PILJA (Serbia, EPP/CD)

[Le nombre de sièges indiqué ne comporte pas, pour les commissions concernées, les membres de droit. // The number of seats does not include, for the committees concerned, the *ex officio* members.]

Appendix 3 – Follow-up to the first part-session of 2024 (Strasbourg, 22-26 January)

Debate on *Recent developments in the Middle East: Hamas' terrorist attack on Israel and Israel's response*

✚ Follow up: decided to seize the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report* on “Situation in the Middle East”

Debate on *A democratic future for Belarus*

✚ Follow up:

- decided to seize the Committee on Political affairs and Democracy *for report*, and the Committee on Legal Affairs *for opinion* on “Situation in Belarus”
- invited the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy to adopt the new Terms of Reference of General Rapporteur for a Democratic Belarus
- instructed the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to prepare a memorandum on modalities of participation of a representative delegation of Belarusian democratic forces in the work of the Assembly

Debate on *Situation of the Children of Ukraine*

✚ Follow up: invited the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development to continue to follow the matter

Appendix 4 – Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2024

Body / Organe	who represents the Assembly / qui représente l'Assemblée	reference	2024
I. Council of Europe bodies / Organes du Conseil de l'Europe			
European Commission for Democracy through Law Venice Commission <i>Commission européenne pour la démocratie par le droit - Commission de Venise</i>	Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau to attend the sessions of the Commission <i>Représentants de l'Assemblée désignés par le Bureau pour assister aux sessions de la Commission</i>	Article 2.4 of the Venice Commission Statute (Res CM (2002) 3) <i>Article 2.4 du statut de la Commission de Venise (Rés CM (2002) 3)</i>	Members: Mr Tiny KOX (Netherlands, UEL) Appointment by the President Mr Antonio GUTIÉRREZ LIMONES (Spain, SOC) (AS/Jur) Substitute: Mr Sergiy VLASENKO (Ukraine, EPP/CD) (AS/Jur)
Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission <i>Conseil des élections démocratiques de la Commission de Venise</i>	Representatives of AS/Pol, AS/Jur and AS/Mon approved by the Bureau of the Assembly <i>Représentants de l'AS/Pol, l'AS/Jur et l'AS/Mon approuvés par le Bureau de l'Assemblée</i>	Bureau decision of 10 March 2003 <i>Décision du Bureau du 10 mars 2003</i>	Members: Mr Michael Georg LINK (Germany, ALDE) (AS/Pol) Mr Pablo HISPÁN (Spain, EPP/CD) (AS/Jur) Ms Laura CASTEL (Spain, UEL) (AS/Mon) Substitutes: Mr Corneliu-Mugurel COZMANCIUC (Romania, EPP/CD) (AS/Pol) Ms Octavie MODERT (Luxembourg, EPP/CD) (AS/Jur) Ms Blerina GJYLAMETI (Albania, SOC) (AS/Mon)
European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity – North-South Centre <i>Centre européen pour l'interdépendance et la solidarité mondiales – Centre Nord-Sud</i>	Two members of the Executive Council - appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly <i>Deux membres du Conseil exécutif - désignés par le Bureau de l'Assemblée</i>	Article 4.2 (b) of the North-South Centre revised Statute (Res CM (2011) 6) <i>Article 4.2 (b) du statut révisé du Centre Nord- Sud (Rés CM (2011) 6)</i>	Members: Ms Edite ESTRELA (Portugal, SOC) (AS/Cult) Mr Stefan SCHENNACH (Austria, SOC) (AS/Soc) Substitutes: Ms Eka SEPASHVILI (Georgia, EC/DA) (AS/Cult) Ms Camen LEYTE (Spain, EPP/CD) (AS/Soc)

Body / Organe	who represents the Assembly / qui représente l'Assemblée	reference	2024
<p>European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance – ECRI</p> <p><i>Commission européenne contre le racisme et l'intolérance – ECRI</i></p>	<p>Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau (representatives of the following three committees: AS/Pol, AS/Ega and AS/Cult)</p> <p><i>Représentants de l'Assemblée désignés par le Bureau (représentants des trois commissions suivantes : AS/Pol, AS/Ega et AS/Cult)</i></p>	<p>Article 5 of the ECRI Statute (Res CM (2002) 8)</p> <p><i>Article 5 du statut de l'ECRI (Rés CM (2002) 8)</i></p>	<p>Members:</p> <p>ZZ (AS/Pol)</p> <p>Ms Mia KARAMEHIĆ-ABAZOVIĆ (Bosnia and Herzegovina, NR) (AS/Cult)</p> <p>Ms Petra BAYR (Austria, SOC) (AS/Ega)</p> <p>Substitutes:</p> <p>ZZ (AS/Pol)</p> <p>ZZ (AS/Cult)</p> <p>Mr Fourat BEN CHIKHA (Belgium, SOC) (AS/Ega)</p>
<p>Group of States against Corruption – GRECO</p> <p><i>Groupe d'états contre la corruption - GRECO</i></p>	<p>A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau</p> <p><i>Un représentant de l'Assemblée désigné par le Bureau</i></p>	<p>CM decision of 717th meeting in 2000 in accordance with Article 7.2 of the Statute of the GRECO</p> <p><i>Décision du CM lors de la 717ème réunion en 2000 selon l'Article 7.2. du Statut du GRECO</i></p>	<p>Member:</p> <p>Ms Agnes Sirkka PRAMMER (Austria, SOC) (AS/Jur)</p> <p>Substitute:</p> <p>ZZ (AS/Jur)</p>
<p>Committee for Works of Art (C-ART)</p> <p><i>Comité des œuvres d'art (C-ART)</i></p>	<p>Two members appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly (at present AS/Cult Committee member and Museum Prize rapporteur)</p> <p><i>Deux membres désignés par le Bureau de l'Assemblée (actuellement un membre de l'AS/Cult et le rapporteur du Prix du musée)</i></p>	<p>CM decision of 482nd meeting in 1992</p> <p><i>Décision du CM lors de la 482ème réunion en 1992</i></p>	<p>Member:</p> <p>Mr Constantinos EFSTATHIOU (Cyprus, SOC) (AS/Cult)</p> <p>Substitute:</p> <p>Mr David MORRIS, (United Kingdom, EC/DA) (AS/Cult)</p>
<p>MONEYVAL</p>	<p>A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau</p> <p><i>Un représentant de l'Assemblée désigné par le Bureau</i></p>	<p>Article 4.1 of Resolution CM/Res (2010) 12</p> <p><i>Article 4.1 de la Résolution CM/Res (2010) 12</i></p>	<p>Member:</p> <p>Ms Maria-Gabriela HORGA (Romania, EPP/CD) (AS/Jur)</p> <p>Substitute:</p> <p>Ms Klotilda BUSHKA (Albania, SOC) (AS/Jur)</p>

Body / Organe	who represents the Assembly / qui représente l'Assemblée	reference	2024
<p>Committee of Experts on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law (PC-ENV)</p> <p><i>Comité d'experts sur la protection de l'environnement par le droit pénal (PC-ENV)</i></p>	<p>The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and at the charge of their corresponding administrative budgets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; <p><i>Peuvent envoyer des représentants sans droit de vote et à la charge de leurs budgets administratifs respectifs :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – <i>l'Assemblée parlementaire du Conseil de l'Europe ;</i> 	<p>CM/Res(2021)3</p>	<p>Members:</p> <p>Mr Constantinos EFSTATHIOU (Cyprus, SOC) (AS/Jur)</p> <p>Yuliia OVCHYNNYKOVA (Ukraine, ALDE) (AS/Soc)</p> <p>Substitutes:</p> <p>ZZ (AS/Jur)</p> <p>Mr Stefan SCHENNACH (Austria, SOC) (AS/Soc)</p>
<p>Committee on offences relating to cultural property (PC-IBC) / Steering Committee for Culture, Heritage and Landscape (CDCPP)</p> <p><i>Comité sur les infractions visant les biens culturels (PC-IBC) / Comité directeur de la culture, du patrimoine et du paysage (CDCPP)</i></p>	<p>The following may send representatives, without the right to vote and at the charge of their corresponding administrative budgets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; <p><i>Un représentant de l'Assemblée désigné par le Bureau;</i></p>	<p>STCE n°221</p> <p>CM(2017)32, Chapter V, Article 23.1</p> <p>SG/Inf(2012)12</p>	<p>Mr Stefan SCHENNACH (Austria, SOC) (AS/Cult)</p>
<p>II. Others / Autres</p>			
<p>EUROPA NOSTRA Pan-European Federation for Heritage</p> <p><i>EUROPA NOSTRA - Fédération paneuropéenne du patrimoine</i></p>	<p>One member (and substitute) to be nominated by the Assembly - to attend the Federation Council meetings as observer</p> <p><i>Un membre (et son/sa suppléant/e) qui seront désignés par l'Assemblée pour assister aux réunions du Conseil de la Fédération en tant qu'observateurs</i></p>	<p>Article 21.4 of the Statute of Europa Nostra</p>	<p>Member:</p> <p>ZZ (AS/Cult)</p> <p>Substitute:</p> <p>ZZ (AS/Cult)</p>