

SECRETARIAT

AS/Pol (2023) CB 08
15 December 2023

To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 12 and 13 December 2023

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Paris on 12 and 13 December 2023, first with Mr Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland, SOC), First Vice-Chairperson, and then with Mr Emanuelis Zingeris (Lithuania, EPP/CD, Second Vice-Chairperson, and Ms María Valentina Martínez Ferro (Spain, EPP/CD), Third Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, with the participation of Ms Despina Chatzivassiliou-Tsovilis, Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly,

- **on Tuesday 12 December 2023**, as regards:
 - ***Recent developments in Libya and in the Middle East: what consequences for Europe?*** (*rapporteur: Mr Piero Fassino, Italy, SOC*): held two separate hearings with the participation of Ambassador Haim Assaraf, Head of the Permanent Mission of Israel to Multilateral Organizations in France, and with Ambassador Hala Abou Hassira, Head of the Mission of Palestine to France, respectively;
 - ***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*** (*rapporteur: Ms Dora Bakoyannis, Greece, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the rapporteur following her fact-finding visit to Kosovo* from 1 to 3 November, and considered an introductory memorandum;
 - ***Call for a national political reform process in Belarus*** (*rapporteur: Mr Kimmo Kiljunen, Finland, SOC*): agreed with the proposal by the rapporteur to change the title of the report to “A democratic future for Belarus”, considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution as amended and a draft recommendation;
 - ***Ad hoc Sub-Committee to participate in the Helsinki Dialogue on Belarus***: approved the composition of the ad hoc Sub-Committee (see appendix) and took note that the composition may be updated by written procedure should additional members of the Committee wish to become members of the ad hoc Sub-Committee later on; took note of the draft programme of the Helsinki Dialogue;
 - ***Foreign interference: a threat to democratic security in Europe*** (*rapporteur: Ms María Valentina Martínez Ferro, Spain, EPP/CD*): considered an introductory memorandum, and heard a statement by the rapporteur relating to her resignation;
 - ***Strengthening a youth perspective in the work of the Parliamentary Assembly*** (*rapporteur: Mr Anastasios Chatzivasileiou, Greece, EPP/CD*): heard a statement by the rapporteur on his online participation in the 50th meeting of the Advisory Council on Youth of the Council of Europe on 23 October 2023; heard a statement by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly on her participation in the Youth Space Berlin 2023 Conference “The Future of the Council of Europe after the Fourth Summit” (16-17 November 2023); took unanimous position in favour of the 10 amendments to the draft resolution contained in the opinion of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media;

* 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.

- **The role of sanctions as a protective measure for human rights and democracy** (*rapporteur: Ms Yelyzaveta Yasko, Ukraine, EPP/CD*): held a hearing with the participation of Ms Nataliia Shapoval, Chairperson of the Kyiv School of Economics Institute (online), Mr Benjamin Hilgenstock, Senior Economist of the Kyiv School of Economics Institute, and Mr Craig Kennedy, Associate of the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University (online), and considered an outline report;
 - **on Wednesday 13 December 2023**, as regards:
 - **Recent developments in Libya and in the Middle East: what consequences for Europe?** (*rapporteur: Mr Piero Fassino, Italy, SOC*): agreed with the proposal by the rapporteur to change the title of the report to “Recent developments in the Middle East: Hamas’ terrorist attack on Israel and Israel’s response”; considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution as amended; and took note of the intention of the rapporteur to present an addendum to the report to be adopted during the January part-session 2024, in order to take account of developments;
 - **General Rapporteur on Democracy**: appointed, by acclamation, Mr George Papandreou (Greece, SOC) as General Rapporteur on Democracy, with a mandate to take effect as from the January 2024 part-session, and heard from him a declaration of absence of conflict of interest;
 - **Supporting a European perspective for the Western Balkans** (*former rapporteur: Mr George Papandreou, Greece, SOC*): heard a statement by the former rapporteur with regards to the follow up to the conference on “Inter-parliamentary dialogue to further promote the European integration of the Western Balkans” held in Skopje on 20 October 2023, followed by an exchange of views;
 - **The theme of migration and asylum in the election campaign and the consequences on the welcoming and rights of migrants** (*rapporteur for opinion: Mr Tural Ganjaliyev, Azerbaijan, EC/DA*): took note that the rapporteur for opinion had delegated Mr Samad Seyidov (Azerbaijan, EC/DA) to present his opinion in the committee; considered and approved a draft opinion to the report of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons, including four amendments;
 - **Support for the reconstruction of Ukraine** (*rapporteur: Mr Lulzim Basha, Albania, EPP/CD*): considered an introductory memorandum;
 - **Work programme:**
 - **Invitation to hold a meeting in Oslo on 30 and 31 May 2024**: took note of, and welcomed the invitation letter of the Chairperson of the Norwegian delegation to the Assembly and decided to revert to it during January 2024 part-session;
 - **Appointment of rapporteurs for reports:**
 - appointed, by acclamation, Mr George Papandreou (Greece, SOC) for the report “Strengthening democracy through participatory and deliberative processes”;
 - following votes, appointed the following rapporteurs:
 - Ms Marietta Karamanli (France, SOC) for the report “Review of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic”
 - Ms Zanda Kalniņa-Lukaševica (Latvia, EPP/CD) for the report “Foreign interference: a threat to democratic security in Europe”
- and heard from them declarations of absence of conflict of interest;
- Mr Rik Daems (Belgium, ALDE) for the report “Shaping the Parliamentary Assembly’s relations with the United Nations Human Rights Council”, subject to hearing from him a declaration of interests;
- **Declaration of interests**: heard a declaration of absence of conflict of interests from Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC), rapporteur for the report “Political consequences of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine”;

- appointed Mr Alexis Tsipras (Greece, UEL) to present in plenary the report “Globalisation in times of crises and war: The role of the OECD since the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine” (former rapporteur: Mr George Katrougalos, Greece, UEL);

– **Other business:**

- called for nominations for the 2024 Vigdís Prize for Women’s Empowerment;
- took note of the list of its members to the ad hoc Committee of the Bureau to participate in a PACE co-operation activity on “The situation of the children of Ukraine”, to be held on 15 December in Paris, as already agreed by written procedure:

Ms Elena BONETTI (Italy, ALDE)
Mr Bjarni JÓNSSON (Iceland, ALDE)
Ms Zanda KALNIŅA-LUKAŠEVICA (Latvia, EPP/CD)
Mr Gonzalo ROBLES (Spain, EPP/CD)
Mr Yıldırım Tuğrul TÜRKER (Türkiye, NR)
Ms Oleksandra USTINOVA (Ukraine, ALDE)

– **Next meetings:** took note of the meetings in 2024 to be held as follows:

- 11-12 January 2024, Helsinki – ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Helsinki Dialogue
- January part-session (22-26 January 2024), Strasbourg
- 5 March 2024, Paris
- April part-session (15-19 April 2024), Strasbourg
- 30 and 31 May 2024, Oslo (subject to the Committee’s decision and to the authorisation of the Bureau)
- June part-session (24-28 June 2024), Strasbourg
- 9 September 2024, Paris
- October part-session (30 September to 4 October 2024), Strasbourg
- 11 December 2024, Paris

Sonia Sirtori, Cesare Colombo, John Dorber

cc. Secretary General of the Assembly
Director and all staff of the Secretariat of the Assembly
Secretaries of National Delegations and of Political Groups of the Assembly
Secretaries of observer and partner for democracy delegations
Secretary General of the Congress
Secretary to the Committee of Ministers
Directors General
Director of the Private Office of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe
Director of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights
Director of Communication
Permanent Representations to the Council of Europe

Appendix

Ad hoc Sub-Committee to participate in the Helsinki Dialogue on Belarus

Sous-commission ad hoc pour participer au Dialogue d'Helsinki sur le Bélarus

29 seats / 29 sièges

LIST OF MEMBERS / LISTE DES MEMBRES

Chairperson / Président·e

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Full Members / Membres titulaires

Alternates / Remplaçant·e·s

1.	Mr LOPATKA Reinhold (EPP/CD)	Austria / Autriche
2.	Mr KILJUNEN Kimmo (SOC)	Finland / Finlande
3.	Mme KARAMANLI Marietta (SOC)	France
4.	M. KERN Claude (ALDE)	France
5.	Mr PAPANDREOU George (SOC)	Greece / Grèce
6.	Mr JÓNSSON Bjarni (ALDE)	Iceland / Islande
7.	Mr FASSINO Piero (SOC)	Italy / Italie
8.	Mr ZINGERIS Emanuelis (EPP/CD)	Lithuania / Lituanie
9.	Mr LYDEKA Arminas (ALDE)	Lithuania / Lituanie
10.	M. GRAAS Gusty (ALDE)	Luxembourg
11.	Ms SCHOU Ingjerd Schie (EPP/CD)	Norway / Norvège
12.	Mr MULARCZYK Arkadiusz (EC/DA)	Poland / Pologne
13.	Mr KLICH Bogdan (EPP/CD)	Poland / Pologne
14.	Mr GUTIÉRREZ LIMONES Antonio (SOC)	Spain / Espagne
15.	Mr GÖTHBERG Gustaf (EPP/CD)	Sweden / Suède
16.	Mr DIBRIANI Adnan (SOC)	Sweden / Suède
17.	Lord BLENCATHRA David (EC/DA)	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
18.	Ms LATHAM Pauline (EC/DA)	United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
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Ex officio: Mr Zsolt Németh

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

Other participants

Ms BOGUJEVCI Saranda

Delegation of the Assembly of Kosovo* / Délégation de l'Assemblée du Kosovo*

Mr GASHI Arben

Delegation of the Assembly of Kosovo* / Délégation de l'Assemblée du Kosovo*

Mr GALLES Paul (Luxembourg, PPE/DC)

Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons /
Commission des migrations, des réfugiés et des personnes déplacées

Ms ÆVARSDÓTTIR Thórhildur Sunna (Iceland, SOC)

Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights /
Commission des questions juridiques et des droits de l'homme

Mr GONCHARENKO Oleksii (Ukraine, EC/DA)¹

Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights /
Commission des questions juridiques et des droits de l'homme

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¹ Possible participation either in his own right (subject to the availability of funds) or as a substitute to Ms Aevarsdóttir.

Mme BENAZIZ Salma

Partner for democracy delegation of Morocco / Partenaire pour la démocratie
Délégation du Maroc

M. BOUANOU Abdellah

Partner for democracy delegation of Morocco / Partenaire pour la démocratie
Délégation du Maroc