



SECRETARIAT

AS/Jur (2023) CB 04

26 May 2023

To the members of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights

Synopsis of the meeting held in Larnaca, Cyprus on 22-23 May 2023

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Larnaca on 22-23 May 2023, with Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) in the Chair, as regards:

- on Monday 22 May 2023 at 9.30am,
- **Welcoming address:** heard a welcoming address and interventions by Ms Annita Demetriou, President of House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus and Mr Nicos Tornaritis, Chairperson of the Cypriot delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;

With Mr Davor Ivo Stier (Croatia, EPP/CD), First Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, as regards:

- **The European Convention on Human Rights in Cyprus:** held a hearing with the participation of:

Ms Anna Koukkides-Procopiou, Minister of Justice and Public Order of the Republic of Cyprus
Dr Costas Paraskeva, Associate Professor of Public and Human Rights Law, University of Cyprus, Advocate, former Member of the CPT;

With Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) in the Chair as regards:

- **Petition on alleged conflict of interest of judges of the European Court of Human Rights:** considered and approved an information note submitted by the chairperson on the admissibility of the petition; decided to submit the information note to the Bureau;
- **The arbitrary detention of Vladimir Kara-Murza and the systematic persecution of anti-war protesters in the Russian Federation** (*Rapporteur: Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir, Iceland, SOC*) held a hearing with the participation of:

Ms Evgenia Kara-Murza, wife of the Russian opposition activist and Advocacy Coordinator at the “Free Russia Foundation”
Mr Denis Shedov, human rights activist, lawyer for the imprisoned municipal councilor Aleksei Gorinov and analyst at OVD-Info;
- **Appointment of a General Rapporteur for political prisoners:** appointed Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC) by acclamation. Heard a declaration of no conflict of interests from Ms Ævarsdóttir and noted that, as a result of this appointment, she relinquished her Rapporteurship as General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and whistleblowers;
- **Possible appointment of a General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders:** decided to postpone the appointment until the June part-session 2023;

– **References transmitted to the committee:**

- Made a call for Rapporteur for the next report on Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (Bureau decision);
- Made a call for a Rapporteur for opinion for the transmission by the Committee of Ministers for consultation on the application for membership set out in the letter of 12 May 2022 addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (document DD(2022)200), in line with Statutory Resolution (51) 30 (Bureau decision) (*Reference sent to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy for report (for the preparation of the statutory Opinion to the Committee of Ministers on the application for membership)*);

– **References for inclusion in other reports:**

- The question of the right to just and equal redress and the access to court and a fair trial for all victims of the German aggression during the Second World War ([Doc. 15690](#)): agreed to the Bureau's proposal: to take this into account in the preparation of the report on "Reparation and reconciliation processes to overcome past conflicts and build a common peaceful future – the question of just and equal redress" and took note of a statement by the Rapporteur on the interpretation of his mandate.
- Ensuring the right to fair trial in the context of State immunities: how to strike the right balance? ([Doc. 15712](#)): agreed to the Bureau's proposal that this be taken into account in the framework of the report on "Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine";

– **Reference for consultation:**

- Misuse of the anti-money laundering measures and countering the financing of terrorism regulations as a tool of transnational repression ([Doc. 15697](#)): agreed that this matter was adequately taken into account during the adoption of the report on "*Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights*" (Rapporteur: Sir Christopher Chope, United Kingdom, EC/DA);

– **Reference for information:**

- Combating forced "harvesting" and "trafficking" in human organs ([Doc. 15704](#)): the committee took note;

With Mr Davor Ivo Stier (Croatia, EPP/CD) in the Chair as regards:

– **The implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights – inter-State cases:** held a hearing with the participation of:

Mr Polyvios G. Polyviou, Lawyer

Mr Achilleas Demetriades, Lawyer

Mr Levan Meskhoradze, Georgia and Azerbaijan Unit, Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law, Council of Europe

Agreed to a proposal by Mr Givi Mikanaze (Georgia, SOC), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the Implementation of the Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights to hold a meeting of this sub-committee in November, at a location to be determined, with the aim of renewing impetus in the implementation of judgments following the Summit (subject to the availability of funds);

With Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) in the Chair as regards:

– **UK reform of its human rights legislation: consequences for domestic and European Human Rights protection** (Rapporteur: Mr Kamal Jafarov, Azerbaijan, EC/DA): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;

- on Tuesday 23 May 2023 at 2.30pm¹,
- **Hearings during the next meeting:** authorised the following hearing and exchange of views and agreed to open them to the public:

Towards a transparency register within the Parliamentary Assembly (*Rapporteur: Ms Azadeh Rojhan Gustafsson, Sweden, SOC*), with an invitation to be extended to three experts, subject to the availability of funds;

The right to freedom of information: ensuring access to historical documents (*Rapporteur: Ms Klotilda Bushka, Albania, SOC*): with an invitation to be extended to the former Chair of the committee, Mr Boriss Cilevičs, subject to the availability of funds;
- **Other business:**
 - *Sub-committees:*
 - Agreed to add Ms Domencia Spinelli (Italy, EC/DA) to the waiting list of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights to become a titular member when a seat becomes available;
 - Agreed that Mr Andrea Orlando (Italy, SOC) become a titular member of the Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights;
 - Agreed that Mr Ettore Antonio Licheri (Italy, NR) become a titular member of the Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights;
 - *93rd GRECO Plenary Meeting - Strasbourg, 20 – 24 March 2023:* took note of the written information provided by the committee's representative, Mrs. Elena Simona Spătaru (*Romania, ALDE*);
- ***Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights*** (*Rapporteur: Sir Christopher Chope, United Kingdom, EC/DA*): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation;
- ***The right to freedom of information: ensuring access to historical documents*** (*Rapporteur: Ms Klotilda Bushka, Albania, SOC*): considered an introductory memorandum and held a hearing with the participation of:

Ms Paige Morrow, Senior Legal Advisor (External) to the UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Opinion and Expression

Mrs. Gentiana Sula, Chair of the Authority for Access into Ex Sigurimi Records during the Communist Dictatorship;
- **Next meetings:**
 - *during the Assembly's 3rd part-session of 2023 (19-23 June 2023*
 - *8 September 2023, Paris Office* – confirmed this meeting;
 - *during the Assembly's 4th part-session of 2023 (9-13 October 2023)*
 - *1 December 2023, Paris Office (t.b.c.).*

Günter Schirmer, Eleanor Hourigan, George Stafford, Laura Cestaro

cc: Secretary General of the Assembly
 Directors and all staff of the Secretariat of the Assembly
 Secretaries of National Delegations and of Political Groups of the Assembly
 Secretaries of observer and partner for democracy delegations
 Secretary General of the Congress

¹ On the morning of 23 May 2023, the committee made a visit to the government-controlled area of Famagusta.

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