



SECRETARIAT

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7 December 2023

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

Synopsis of the meeting held in Paris on 30 November and 1 December 2023

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Paris on 30 November 2023 (from 2.30-6pm) with Mr Constantinios Efstahtiou (Cyprus, SOC) in the Chair, then on 1 December 2023 (9.30-5.30pm) with Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) in the Chair:

- On Thursday 30 November 2023 (from 2.30-6pm), as regards,
 - **Election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights by the Parliamentary Assembly:** approved a memorandum prepared by the Secretariat at the request of the Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights;
 - **Reparation and reconciliation processes to overcome past conflicts and build a common peaceful future – the question of just and equal redress** (*Rapporteur: Lord Richard Keen, United Kingdom, EC/DA*): considered a draft [report](#) and adopted of a draft resolution and a draft recommendation, the latter unanimously;
 - **Countering SLAPPs: an imperative for the democratic society** (*Rapporteur for opinion: Mr Davor Ivo Stier, Croatia, EPP/CD*) (*Rapporteur for the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media: Mr Stefan Schennach, Austria, SOC*): considered and approved an opinion on the report of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media;
 - **Abolition of the death penalty:** Re-appointed Mr Aleksandar Nikoloski, (North Macedonia, EPP/CD) as General Rapporteur on the abolition of the death penalty for a second term (first term: appointed on 12.12.2022). Considered a revised information note and agreed to its declassification;
 - **Sanctions of persons on the "Kara-Murza list"** (*Rapporteur: Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross, Estonia, ALDE*) 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 Bill Browder - Head of Sergei Magnitsky Justice Campaign, United Kingdom (online);
- On Friday 1 December 2023 (from 9.30am 1pm), as regards,
 - **Election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights by the Parliamentary Assembly [in camera]:** held interviews with the three shortlisted candidates for the post of Commissioner for Human Rights and agreed on its report to be sent to the Bureau of the Assembly with the committee's recommendation;

- **On Friday 1 December 2023 (from 2.30-5pm)**, as regards,
- **Human Rights Defenders: Whistleblowers** (*General Rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris (Lithuania, EPP/CD)*) held a hearing with the participation of:

Mr Sergei Cristo, Whistleblower
 Ms Anna Myers, Executive Director of the Whistleblowing International Network (WIN), United Kingdom
 Mr Jean-Philippe Foegle, Expert on whistleblowers and researcher and doctoral student in public and European law;
- **Follow-up to the meeting of the Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in Zagreb** (13-14 November 2023): heard an oral report by the Rapporteur on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights (12th Report) , Mr Constantinos Efstathiou, (Cyprus, SOC). Considered a revised information note on ["Reykjavik Follow-Up: The Role of PACE and National Parliamentarians in Improving the Timely and Effective Implementation of Judgments of the European Court of Human Rights"](#) and agreed to its declassification;
- **References transmitted to the committee:**
 - **The detention of Julian Assange and its chilling effects on human rights** ([Doc. 15777](#)): made a call for a Rapporteur to be appointed during the January part-session;
 - **Reference transmitted for inclusion in another report:**

The role of sanctions as a protective measure for human rights and democracy ([Doc. 15812](#)): took note of this reference to be taken into account in the framework of the report on "Sanctions of persons on the "Kara-Murza list";
 - **Support for the reconstruction of Ukraine** ([Doc. 15732](#)): agreed to request the Bureau to be seized for an opinion on the report being prepared by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy;
- **Replies from the Committee of Ministers to recommendations emanating from the Committee:** took note of the following replies from the Committee of Ministers concerning:
 - [Recommendation 2241 \(2022\)](#) on "The impact of the Covid-19 restrictions for civil society space and activities" adopted at the 1 473rd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies on 6 September 2023. Took note of the reply;
 - [Recommendation 2242 \(2022\)](#) on "The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on prison population in Europe" adopted at the 1 477th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies on 4 October 2023. Noted the concerns of the Rapporteur and his intention to follow them up. ;
- **Hearings during the next meeting:** agreed to hold the following hearings during the January part-session (open to the public if the experts agree), subject to the availability of funds and subject to time constraints in meeting slots allocated to the Committee:

"Abolition of the death penalty", on the abolition of the death penalty in observer and "partner for democracy" States

"Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine" (*Rapporteur: Mr Davor Ivo Stier, Croatia, EPP/CD*): hearing focused on the compensation mechanism and possible use of Russian assets for purposes of reparation of the damage caused to Ukraine;
- **Other business**
 - **Legal aspects of the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights** (*Rapporteur: Mr Titus Corlăţean, Romania, SOC*): decided to request the Bureau for an extension of the reference until 30 June 2024;

- **Sub-committees:**
- *Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights:* agreed that Mr. Saša Magazinović, (Bosnia and Herzegovina, SOC), who was on the waiting list, be given a recently vacated seat as titular member. Agreed that the previous members of the French delegation (Mr Frédéric Mathieu and Mr André Vallini) be replaced by M. Alain Milon (EPP/CD) and Mme Michelle Greau (UEL) as titular members;
- *Sub-Committee on Human Rights:* agreed that Ms Domenica Spinelli (Italy, EC/DA), who was on the waiting list, be given a recently vacated seat as titular member. Agreed that the previous members of the French delegation (Mr André Gattolin and Mr Frédéric Mathieu) be replaced by M. Olivier Blitz (ALDE) and Mr Christophe Chaillou (SOC) as titular members;
- **Call for nominations for the [2024 Vigdís Prize for Women's Empowerment](#)** – made a call for candidatures and noted the details available on the PACE site;
- **Helsinki Dialogue on Belarus– ad hoc Sub-Committee of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, 11-12 January 2024** – agreed to the participation of Ms Sunna Aevarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC) and the possible participation of Mr Oleksii Goncharenko (Ukraine, EC/DA) either in his own right (subject to the availability of funds) or as substitute to Ms Aevarsdóttir;
- **Platform for dialogue between the Assembly and the Russian democratic forces/ civil society:** took note of the participation of Sir Christopher Chope (United Kingdom, EC/DA), in his capacity as third Vice-Chairperson, in this meeting on 14 December 2023;
- **Exchange of views with the Steering Committee for Human Rights (CDDH) of the Council of Europe:** heard an oral report by the Chair on his participation in this exchange held on 29 November 2023, during the 99th meeting of the CDDH;
- **Next meetings:** confirmed the meeting on 4 March 2024 at the Paris office.

Plenary Committee:

- during the Assembly's 1st part-session of 2024 (22-26 January 2024)
- 4 March 2024, Paris Office
- during the Assembly's 2nd part-session of 2024 (15-19 April 2024)
- 21 May 2024, Paris Office (t.b.c.)
- during the Assembly's 3rd part-session of 2024 (24-28 June 2024)
- 11 September 2023, Paris Office (t.b.c.)
- during the Assembly's 4th part-session of 2024 (30th September – 4 October 2024)
- 10 December 2024, Paris Office (t.b.c.)

Günter Schirmer, Guillem Cano-Palomares, Eleanor Hourigan, George Stafford

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