



SECRETARIAT

AS/Pol (2023) CB 04

16 May 2023

## To the members of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

### Synopsis

#### of the meeting held in Seville (Spain) on 11-12 May 2023

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Seville (Spain) on 11-12 May 2023, with Mr Zsolt Németh (Hungary, EC/DA), Chairperson, and Mr Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland, SOC), First Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, with the participation of Ms Despina Chatzivassiliou-Tsovilis, Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly,

- **on Thursday 11 May 2023 from 9:30 to 12:30**, as regards:
  - **Welcome address**: heard a welcome address by Mr Antonio Gutiérrez Limones, Chairperson of the Spanish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly;
  - **Exchange of views with the Spanish authorities**: held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms Pilar Llop Cuenca, Minister of Justice of Spain;
  - **The role of the Council of Europe in preventing conflicts, restoring credibility of international institutions and promoting global peace** (*rapporteur*: Ms Lesia Vasylenko, Ukraine, ALDE): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution and a draft recommendation, as amended;
  - **The Reykjavik Summit of the Council of Europe: United around values in the face of extraordinary challenges** (*rapporteur for follow-up*: Ms Fiona O'Loughlin, Ireland, ALDE): heard a statement by the rapporteur for follow-up on the preparations for the Reykjavik Summit of the Council of Europe, followed by an exchange of views;
  - **Interconnections between the Council of Europe and the European Political Community** (*rapporteur*: Mr Zsolt Németh, Hungary, EC/DA): held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr Szabolcs Horvath, Political and Legal Advisor, Cabinet Member of European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighbourhood, European Commission, and considered an introductory memorandum;
- **on Thursday 11 May 2023 from 14:30 to 18:00**, as regards:
  - **Strengthening relations between the Council of Europe and Latin America** (*rapporteur*: Mr Antonio Gutiérrez Limones, Spain, SOC): held a hearing with the participation of Ms Carmen Almendras Camargo, former Vice-Chancellor of Bolivia; Mr Enrique Ojeda Vila, Director General of Casa América; Spain; and Mr Javier Velasco Villegas, Ambassador of Chile to Spain;
  - **Relationship between the parliamentary majority and the opposition in a democracy** (*rapporteur*: Ms Elvira Kovács, Serbia, EPP/CD): considered an outline report;

- **Changes to membership in Sub-Committees:** approved the following changes:

**Sub-Committee on Democracy**

Ms Elisabetta Gardini (Italy, EC/DA) becoming member

**ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Western Balkans**

Ms Marietta Karamanli (France, SOC), Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC), and Mr John Howell (United Kingdom, EC/DA) becoming members;

- **on Friday 12 May 2023 from 9:30 to 13:00**, as regards:
- ***Foreign interference: a threat to democratic security in Europe*** (*rapporteur: Ms María Valentina Martínez Ferro, Spain, EPP/CD*): held a hearing with the participation of Mr Nicolás De Pedro, Senior Fellow at the Institute for Statecraft, London, and former member of the Experts Pool on Russia at the European Center of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats (Hybrid CoE), Helsinki; and Mr Rainer Jungwirth, Team leader for research on critical infrastructure protection and hybrid threats, Joint Research Centre (JRC), European Commission, Ispra, Italy;
- ***Political consequences of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine*** (*rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD*): in the absence of the rapporteur, took note of the introductory memorandum, and agreed to request that the report be debated under urgent procedure during the June 2023 part-session;
- ***Work programme:***
  - ***Called for candidates for:***
    - a rapporteur on a 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
    - the *ad hoc* committee of the Bureau of the Assembly to participate in a Side Event (*to be confirmed subject to the agreement of the UN*) “Decent work: building a sustainable future” at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (18 July 2023, United Nations Headquarters, New York)
    - the *ad hoc* committee of the Bureau of the Assembly to participate in the World Forum for Democracy on “Democracy = Peace?” (Strasbourg, 6-8 November 2023)
  - ***Appointment of a rapporteur for opinion:*** appointed, by acclamation, Mr George Loucaides (Cyprus, UEL), rapporteur for opinion on “Reparation and reconciliation processes to overcome past conflicts and build a common peaceful future – the question of just and equal redress”, subject to hearing from him a declaration on conflict of interests;
- ***Authorisations by the Committee:*** authorised the following fact-finding visits:
  - Mr Zsolt Németh (Hungary, EC/DA) to carry out fact-finding visits to Berlin and Warsaw, in the framework of the preparation of his report on “Interconnections between the Council of Europe and the European Political Community” (subject to the availability of funds),
  - Mr Antonio Gutiérrez Limones (Spain, SOC) to carry out fact-finding visits to Parlatino (Panama), subject to the availability of funds, and to Colombia and Mexico (at no cost to the Assembly), in the framework of the preparation of his report on “Strengthening relations between the Council of Europe and Latin America” (subject to the authorisation by the Bureau of the Assembly);

- **Meetings in 2023:** took note of its meetings in 2023 to be held as follows:
- June part-session (19-23 June 2023), Strasbourg
  - 11-12 September 2023, Paris
  - October part-session (9-13 October 2023), Strasbourg
  - 20 October 2023, Skopje – ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Western Balkans
  - 12 December 2023, Paris

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Sonia Sirtori, Ágnes Kertész, Pavel Chevtchenko, John Dorber

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  
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