



SECRETARIAT

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22 June 2023

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

Synopsis of the meeting held in Strasbourg on 20 and 21 June 2023

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Strasbourg on 20 and 21 June 2023 with Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) in the Chair,

- on Tuesday 20 June 2023 from 9.15am – 10.30am, as regards,
 - **Minutes of the meeting held on 24-28 April 2023:** agreed to declassify the minutes pertaining to the joint hearing held on the “Threats to life and safety of journalists and human rights defenders in Azerbaijan”;
 - **UK reform of its human rights legislation: consequences for domestic and European Human Rights protection** (*Rapporteur: Mr Kamal Jafarov, Azerbaijan, EC/DA*): noted no amendments had been tabled to the draft resolution;
 - **The right to freedom of information: ensuring access to historical documents** (*Rapporteur: Ms Klotilda Bushka, Albania, SOC*): held an exchange of views with Mr Boriss Cilevičs, former Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights;
 - **Appointment of a General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders:** appointed Mr Emanuelis Zingeris (Lithuania, EPP/CD) as General Rapporteur and heard from him a statement of no conflict of interest;
 - **References transmitted to the committee:**
 - **Appointment of a Rapporteur for a report:** Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights – 12th report (Bureau decision): appointed Mr Constantinos Efstathiou (Cyprus, SOC) and heard from him a statement of no conflict of interest;
 - **Call for Rapporteur:** made a call for Rapporteur for the reports “Commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Holodomor of 1932-1933 in Ukraine” ([Doc. 15728](#)) and “Private military companies, mercenaries, foreign fighters and their impact on human rights” ([Doc. 15771](#));
 - **Reference for inclusion in other reports:** agreed to take the reference on “The need to designate the Russian “Wagner Group” as a terrorist organization” ([Doc. 15720](#)) into account in the framework of the report on “Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine” as proposed by the Bureau;
 - **Replies from the Committee of Ministers to recommendations emanating from the Committee:** took note of the reply by the Committee of Ministers to [Recommendation 2223 \(2022\)](#) on “Ending enforced disappearances on the territory of the Council of Europe” and the Rapporteur’s comments thereon ;

- on Wednesday 21 June 2023 from 10.30am – 12.30am, as regards:
 - **World Forum for Democracy:** proposed Mr Constantinos Efstathiou (Cyprus, SOC), Mr Jean-Pierre Grin (Switzerland, ALDE) and Mr Ziya Altunyaldiz (Türkiye, NR) to the ad hoc committee of the Bureau attending the World Forum on Democracy on 6-8 November 2023 in Strasbourg;
 - **Participation of members in conferences, meetings, seminars etc:** took note of reports by the following representatives:

Mr Titus Corlăţean, Romania, SOC on the 94th plenary meeting of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), Strasbourg, 5-9 June 2023;

Mr Davor Ivo Stier, Croatia, EPP/CD on the 77th meeting of the Venice Commission's Council for Democratic Elections, Venice (Italy), 8 June 2023;

Mr Sergiy Vlasenko, Ukraine, EPP/CD on the 135th European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), Venice (Italy), 9-10 June 2023;
 - **Sub-Committee on Human Rights:** took note of an oral report by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the meeting held on Tuesday 20 June 2023 and endorsed the proposals of the Sub-Committee concerning the lists of candidates to the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) submitted by the delegations of Iceland, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Andorra and Azerbaijan for transmission to the Bureau;
 - **References transmitted to the committee:**
 - **Appointment of a Rapporteur for an opinion:** 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); appointed Ms Azadeh Rojhan (Sweden, SOC) and heard from her a statement of no conflict of interest;
 - **Allegations of systemic torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in places of detention in Council of Europe member States (Rapporteur: Mr Constantinos Efstathiou, Cyprus, SOC) :** agreed to change the title of the report to “*Allegations of systemic torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in places of detention in Europe*”; considered a draft report and adopted a draft resolution; noted the intention of Mr Ziya Altunyaldiz (Türkiye, NR) to submit a dissenting opinion;
 - **Sanctions of persons on the "Kara-Murza list" (Rapporteur: Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross, Estonia, ALDE):** considered and agreed to declassify an introductory memorandum and its appendices; agreed to a hearing with the following experts: Mr William Browder, the lead campaigner for the adoption of “Magnitsky laws”, Mr Vadim Prokhorov, Vladimir Kara-Murza’s lawyer and a representative of the investigative journalism consortium Bellingcat, subject to the availability of funds;
 - **Towards a transparency register within the Parliamentary Assembly (Rapporteur: Ms Azadeh Rojhan, Sweden, SOC):** considered an introductory memorandum, authorised the Rapporteur to carry out an online survey of civil society organisations and to hold a hearing at a future meeting with invited experts, subject to the availability of funds;
 - **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2023:** made a call for nominations, noting the deadline of 30 June 2023;
 - **Hearings during the next meeting:** agreed to hold the following hearings with invited experts at the next meeting, subject to the availability of funds, and that they be open to the public provided all invited speakers agree;

1) *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, ED/DA);*

2) *Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine (this first hearing focusing on the Wagner group) (Rapporteur: Mr Davor Ivo Stier, Croatia, EPP/CD);*

– **Other business:**

- **Sub-Committees:** agreed to the following nominations:

- Mr. Alexander Ryle (Denmark, ALDE) to become an alternate to Ms Mette Reissmann on the Sub-committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights;
- Mr Jean-Pierre Grin (Switzerland, ADLE) to replace Ms Carobbio Guscetti as titular member of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights;
- Mr Cerni Escalé (Andorra, NR) to become a titular member of the Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights;
- Ms Etilda Gjonaj (Albania, SOC) to be added to the waiting lists as a titular member of the Sub-Committee on Human Rights and the Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights;

– **Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights** (*Rapporteur: Sir Christopher Chope, United Kingdom, EC/DA*): took position on three amendments to the draft resolution;

– **Next meetings:** agreed that the interviews for the post of the Commissioner for Human Rights would be held at the end of the year before the plenary committee and not the Sub-Committee on Human Rights.

Plenary Committee:

- 8 September 2023, Paris Office
- during the Assembly's 4th part-session of 2023 (9-13 October 2023)
- 30 November 2023, afternoon, Paris Office or 2 December 2023, morning, Paris Office (t.b.c.)
- 1 December 2023, Paris Office (t.b.c.)

The Sub-Committee on Human Rights (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting in Strasbourg on Tuesday 20 June 2023 at 8.30am, with Mr Kamal Jafarov, (Azerbaijan, EC/DA) in the Chair, as regards:

- **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT):** considered the lists of candidates to the CPT in respect of Iceland, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Andorra. Agreed on an order of preference amongst the candidates on each of those lists,

With Ms Octavie Modert (Luxembourg, EPP/CD), Vice-Chairperson, in the Chair, as regards;

- **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT):** considered the list of candidates to the CPT in respect of Azerbaijan. Agreed on an order of preference amongst the candidates on this list,

- **Next meeting:** during the October 2023 part-session.

Günter Schirmer, Guillem Cano-Palomares, 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

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