



SECRETARIAT

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3 May 2023

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

### Synopsis of the meeting held in Strasbourg on 25, 26, 27 April 2023

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Strasbourg on 25, 26, and 27 April 2023:

- on Tuesday 25 April 2023 from 8.30am – 9.30am, as regards:
  - **Joint hearing with the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy (open to the public) on “Ensuring accountability for the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine: the role of the Council of Europe”**, with Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE), Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, in the Chair and then Mr Zsolt Németh Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy (Hungary, EC/DA) in the Chair, with the participation of:  
  
Mr Tiny Kox, President of the Parliamentary Assembly  
Mr Christos Giakoumopoulos, Director General, Directorate General Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI), Council of Europe  
Mr Jörg Polakiewicz, Director of Legal Advice and Public International Law, Council of Europe;
- on Tuesday 25 April 2023 from 9.30am – 10.30am, with Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE), in the Chair, as regards:
  - **European Convention on Human Rights and national constitutions** (*Rapporteur: Mr George Katrougalos, Greece, UEL*): took position on one amendment to the draft resolution;
  - **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*) with the participation of Ms Evgenia Kara-Murza, wife of the Russian opposition activist Vladimir Kara-Murza, and Advocacy Coordinator at the Free Russia Foundation, and of Mr Vadim Prokhorov, Vladimir Kara-Murza’s lawyer, considered an introductory memorandum, agreed to a future hearing with invited experts, subject to the availability of funds;
- On Wednesday 26 April 2023 from 11.30am-12.30pm, as regards:
  - **Examining the legitimacy and legality of the ad hominem term-limit waiver for the incumbent President of the Russian Federation** (*Rapporteur: Mr Pieter Omtzigt, The Netherlands, EPP/CD*): held a hearing with the participation of:

Ms Claire Bazy Malaurie, President of the Venice Commission  
Ms Simona Granata-Menghini, Secretary of the Venice Commission;

- **Sub-Committee on Human Rights:** took note of an oral report by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the meeting held in on Tuesday 25 April 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 San Marino, Cyprus, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Finland for transmission to the Bureau;
- **The implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights – 11<sup>th</sup> report** (*Rapporteur: Mr Constantinos Efstathiou, Cyprus, SOC*) – took position on 2 amendments to the draft resolution;
- **Appointment of rapporteurs:**

Reparation and reconciliation processes to overcome past conflicts and build a common peaceful future – the question of just and equal redress [Doc. 15676](#); appointed Lord Richard Keen (United Kingdom, EC/DA) as Rapporteur and heard from him a statement of no conflict of interest;

Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine (Bureau decision); appointed Mr. Davor Ivo Stier (Croatia, EPP/CD) as Rapporteur and heard from him a statement of no conflict of interest;
- **Call for candidates for the General Rapporteur for political prisoners:** made a call for a general rapporteur to be appointed at the next meeting. Noted the interest of Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC), who, if appointed, would relinquish her current rapporteurship as General Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and whistleblowers. A conditional call for candidates was made for the latter so that both General Rapporteurs could be appointed at the next meeting;
- **Follow-up to the Committee's proposal to establish an ad hoc sub-committee to visit Ukraine in the near future:** noted that this matter was now foreseen for consideration by the Bureau on Friday 27 April 2023 (please see the Bureau’s decision in [AS/BUR 005](#));
- **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2023:** noted the deadline for submission of nominations;
- **Hearings during the next meeting:**

**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*)

**The implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights – inter-State cases** (*Rapporteur for follow-up: Mr Constantinos Efstathiou, Cyprus, SOC*)

**The right to freedom of information: ensuring access to historical documents** (*Rapporteur: Ms Klotilda Bushka, Albania, SOC*)

agreed that experts be invited to the above hearings, subject to the availability of funds, and that the hearings be public;
- **On Thursday 27 April 2023 at 10.30-11.30am**, with Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE), Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, in the Chair and then Ms Yevheniia Kravchuk (Ukraine, ALDE) (Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media) and then Mr Piero Fassino (Italy, SOC), (Chairperson of the Monitoring Committee), as regards,
- **Joint hearing on “Threats to life and safety of journalists and human rights defenders in Azerbaijan”** (*Rapporteur: Ms Hannah Bardell, UK, NR*), (*Rapporteur for opinion (AS/Cult): Stefan Schennach, Austria, SOC*): held a joint hearing with the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media and the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), with the participation of :

Ms Arzu Geybullayeva, Journalist;  
Mr Ulvi Hasanli, Founder and Executive Director of AbzasMedia and  
Ms Jeanne Cavalier, Head of Eastern Europe & Central Asia Desk, Reporters without borders;

– **Next meetings**

*Plenary Committee:*

- 22-23, May 2023, Larnaca, Cyprus
- during the Assembly's 3<sup>rd</sup> part-session of 2023 (19-23 June 2023
- 8 September 2023, Paris Office (t.b.c.)
- during the Assembly's 4<sup>th</sup> part-session of 2023 (9-13 October 2023)
- 1 December 2023, Paris Office (t.b.c.).

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**The Sub-Committee on Human Rights** (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting in Strasbourg on Tuesday 25 April 2023 at 10.30am, 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 San Marino, Cyprus, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Finland. Agreed on an order of preference amongst the candidates on each of those lists, to be transmitted to the plenary Committee for endorsement;
- **Next meeting**: during the June 2023 part-session.

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**The Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights** (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting Tuesday 25 April 2023 at 11.20am, with Mr Virenda Sharma (United Kingdom, SOC) oldest member present in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee**: elected Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC) Chairperson by secret ballot;

Then with Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC) in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Vice-Chairperson of the Sub-Committee**: elected Ms Maria-Gabriela Horga (EPP/CD) by acclamation;
- **Next meeting**: Thursday, 27 April 2023 (joint hearing on “Exploring AI in schools” (open to the public) with the Sub-Committee on Children of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development and with the Sub-Committee on Education, Youth and Sport of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media).

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**The Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights** (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting on Tuesday 25 April 2023 at 11.25am, with Mr Virenda Sharma (United Kingdom, SOC) oldest member present in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Sub-Committee's Bureau**: elected Mr Givi Mikanadze (Georgia, SOC) Chairperson by acclamation and decided to postpone the election of the Vice-Chairperson to a future meeting;

- **Next meeting:** left it to the Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

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**The Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights** (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), in a joint meeting with the Sub-Committee on Children of the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development and the Sub-Committee on Education, Youth and Sport of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media in Strasbourg, on Thursday, 27 April 2023, with Ms Sevinj Fataliyeva (Azerbaijan, EC/DA), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Children, in the Chair, as regards:

- **“Exploring AI in schools”:** held a hearing as follows:
  - heard remarks by Mr Constantinos Efstathiou (Cyprus, SOC), acting Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Education, Youth and Sport, and Ms Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights;
  - heard a presentation on the humanoid Niki by Ms Peggy Pelonis, President of the American Community Schools (ACS) of Athens (Greece), and students of the ACS;
  - heard a presentation on the Council of Europe work on artificial intelligence and children by Mr Kristian Bartholin, Head of Digital Development Unit, Council of Europe;
  - held a discussion with students of the Hans-Furter-Gymnasium of Oberkirch (Germany);
- **Next meeting of the Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights:** left it to the Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

Günter Schirmer, Guillem Cano-Palomares, Eleanor Hourigan, 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