

SECRETARIAT

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22 June 2023

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

### Synopsis of the meetings held in Strasbourg from 19 to 22 June 2023

The **Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy**, meeting in Strasbourg from 19 to 22 June 2023, with Mr Zsolt Németh (Hungary, EC/DA), Chairperson, in the Chair,

- **on Monday 19 June 2023 at 13:00**, as regards:
  - ***Political consequences of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine*** (*rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD*): approved the proposal by the rapporteur to change the title as follows: "Political consequences of the Russian Federation's war of aggression against Ukraine", considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution as amended;
- **on Tuesday 20 June 2023 at 10:30**, as regards:
  - ***Dialogue with Belarusian democratic forces*** (*in the context of the preparation of the report "Call for a national political reform process in Belarus", rapporteur: Mr Kimmo Kiljunen, Finland, SOC*): heard a statement by Ms Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, Leader of the Belarus democratic forces, and held a hearing with the participation of Mr Ivan Kravtsov, Executive Secretary, member of the Coordination Council, Razam 'Together' Party; and Mr Anatol Liabedzka, Adviser to Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya on constitutional reform and parliamentary co-operation, United Civil (Civic) Party; with the participation also of Ms Violaine Billette de Villemeur, Ambassador, Special Envoy for Belarus (France);
  - ***The challenge of far-right ideology to democracy and human rights in Europe*** (*rapporteur: Mr Samad Seyidov, Azerbaijan, EC/DA*): held a hearing with the participation of Mr Nicos Alivizatos (Greece), member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), and considered a revised preliminary draft report;
  - ***Work programme: Appointment of rapporteurs for report***: appointed, by acclamation, Ms Theodora Bakoyannis (Greece, EPP/CD), rapporteur on the "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", subject to hearing from her a declaration on conflict of interests;
- **on Wednesday 21 June 2023 at 10:30**, as regards:
  - ***The financing of political parties***: held a joint hearing with the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), with the participation of Ms Julia Cagé, Associate Professor of Economics, Sciences Po Paris (online); Mr Nicos Alivizatos (Greece), Member of the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission); and Ms Sophie Meudal-Leenders, Senior Legal Adviser, Secretariat of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO);

- on **Wednesday 21 June 2023 at 11:30**, as regards:
  - ***Follow-up to Assembly Resolution 2433 (2022) “Consequences of the Russian Federation’s continued aggression against Ukraine: role and response of the Council of Europe” and Resolution 2473 (2022) “Strengthening the role of the Council of Europe as a cornerstone of the European political architecture”***: held a joint hearing with the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons on “Issues confronting Russians in exile”, with the participation of Mr Gennady Gudkov, Deputy of the State Duma of 3, 4, 5, and 6 convocations, Deputy Chairman of the Security Committee (2001-2012), Leader of the People’s Party of Russia (2003-2008), Chairman of the NGO “For Free Russia”; Ms Karinna Moskalenko, Russian lawyer, founder of the Centre de la Protection Internationale; Ms Ekaterina Shulman, Russian political scientist, publicist; Ms Daria Belova, Chairperson of the initiative to help refugees “inTransit”, representative of the Ark (Kovcheg); Ms Mariia Novikova, human rights lawyer, Secretary of the Russian Democratic Club in France; Ms Elena Colombo, Co-founder of the Association for assistance to Russian asylum seekers in France (Russie-Asile); and Mr Alexey Obolenets, lawyer and human rights defender; with the participation also of Mr Tiny Kox, President of the Parliamentary Assembly;
- on **Thursday 22 June 2023 at 10:30**, as regards:
  - ***Political consequences of the Russian Federation’s war of aggression against Ukraine*** (*rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris, Lithuania, EPP/CD*): took position on the 9 amendments which had been tabled to the draft resolution; decided to present 2 sub-amendments and 3 oral amendments; and appointed Ms Yelyzaveta Yasko to represent the Chairperson of the Committee during the debate in plenary;
  - ***Globalisation in times of crises and war: The role of the OECD since the Russian Federation’s aggression against Ukraine*** (*rapporteur: Mr George Katrougalos, Greece, UEL*): considered and declassified a preliminary draft report;
  - ***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;
  - ***Political situation in Tunisia*** (*rapporteur: Mr Claude Kern, France, ALDE*): heard a statement by the rapporteur;
  - ***Work programme***:
    - ***Call for candidates for report***: called for candidates for “Support for the reconstruction of Ukraine”;
    - ***Requests for the extension of references***: agreed to request extensions of the validity of the following references for a period of one year:
      - “The need for renewed, effective and inclusive multilateralism” (*rapporteur: Ms Theodora Bakoyannis, Greece, EPP/CD*), until 27 September 2024;
      - “Call for Famagusta’s return to its lawful inhabitants” (*rapporteur: Mr Piero Fassino, Italy, SOC*), until 27 September 2024;
      - “Political situation in Tunisia” (*rapporteur: Mr Claude Kern, France, ALDE*), until 30 September 2024;
    - ***Appointments*** : appointed:
      - Mr George Katrougalos (Greece, UEL) and Mr Serhii Soboliev (Ukraine, EPP/CD) to sit on the *ad hoc* committee of the Bureau of the Assembly to participate in a proposed Side Event “Decent work: building a sustainable future” at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (14 July 2023, United Nations Headquarters, New York);
      - Lord David Blencathra (United Kingdom, EC/DA) to sit on the *ad hoc* committee of the Bureau of the Assembly to participate in the launch of the Council of Europe Campaign for Safety of Journalists (5-6 October 2023, Riga);

- **Motion for a resolution to be tabled on behalf of the committee:** considered and approved a motion for a resolution on “Review of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic”;
- **Declaration on conflict of interests:** heard a declaration of absence of conflict of interests from 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”;
- **Changes to membership in Sub-Committees:** approved the following changes:
  - Sub-Committee on Democracy
  - Mr Cerni Escalé (Andorra, SOC) and Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) becoming members;
  - Sub-Committee on External Relations
  - Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) becoming a member;
  - ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Western Balkans
  - Ms Deborah Bergamini (Italy, EPP/CD) becoming a member;
- **Next meetings:** took note of the meetings in 2023 to be held as follows:
  - 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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The **Sub-Committee on the Middle East and the Arab World** (of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy), meeting in Strasbourg on Thursday 22 June 2023, with Mr Reinhold Lopatka (Austria, EPP/CD), Chairperson, in the Chair, as regards:

- **Recent developments in the Middle East:** held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms Meirav Ben Ari, Chairperson of the Observer delegation of Israel to the Parliamentary Assembly; Mr Bismuth Boaz, member of the Observer delegation of Israel to the Parliamentary Assembly; and Mr Bernard Sabella, Chairperson, Palestinian partner for democracy delegation;
- **Date and place of the next meeting:** left it to its Chairperson to convene the next meeting.

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