

SECRETARIAT

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23 April 2024

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

### Synopsis of the meeting held in Strasbourg from 15 to 18 April 2024

The Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, meeting in Strasbourg from 15 to 18 April 2024, with Lord Richard Keen (United Kingdom, EC/DA), Chairperson, in the Chair:

- on Monday 15 April 2024 at 2pm, as regards:
  - **Debate under urgent procedure on “Alexei Navalny’s death and the need to counter Vladimir Putin’s totalitarian regime and its war on democracy”** (Rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris (Lithuania, EPP/CD); heard a statement of absence of conflict of interests by the Rapporteur who was appointed in absentia on 4 March 2024; considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;
  - **Application by Kosovo<sup>1</sup> for membership of the Council of Europe** (Rapporteur for opinion: Ms Azadeh Rojhan, Sweden, SOC; Rapporteur for the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy: Ms Dora Bakoyannis, Greece): approved a draft opinion;
- on Tuesday 16 April 2024 at 8.30am, as regards:
  - **Debate under urgent procedure on “The arbitrary detention of Vladimir Kara-Murza and the systematic persecution of anti-war protesters in the Russian Federation and Belarus”** (Rapporteur: Ms Thórhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC): heard an intervention by Ms Evgenia Kara-Murza, wife of the imprisoned Russian opposition politician and anti-war activist, Mr Vladimir Kara-Murza; considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft resolution;
  - **Debate under urgent procedure on the Draft Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law** (Rapporteur: Ms Thórhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC)): considered a draft report and unanimously adopted a draft opinion;
  - **Private military companies, mercenaries, foreign fighters and their impact on human rights** (Rapporteur: Mr Andrea Orlando (Italy, SOC)): considered an introductory memorandum and agreed to its declassification; agreed to a future hearing with invited experts, subject to the availability of funds (open to the public should the experts agree);

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<sup>1</sup> All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

- **References transmitted to the committee:**
  - **For report:**

***Ensuring better protection of whistle-blowers in Europe*** [Doc. 15919](#): made a call for a Rapporteur;
  - **To be taken into account in other reports:**

***Establishing a Register of companies that assist Russian entities in evading sanctions and combating circumvention of restrictive measures against Russian entities*** [Doc. 15923](#): took note of the Bureau's request that this should be taken into account in the preparation of the report on "*Legal and human rights aspects of the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine*" (Rapporteur: Mr. Davor Ivo Stier (Croatia, EPP/CD);
  - **For opinion :**

***Media concentration and threats to media pluralism and independence*** [Doc. 15916](#): (Reporting Committee: Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media: called for a Rapporteur for opinion (this appointment to be made following the appointment of a Rapporteur by the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media);
  - **For information:**

***Ensuring full independence and respect for the separation of powers by Constitutional courts*** [Doc. 15918](#): took note of this reference;
- **Other business**
  - **Sub-Committees:** accepted the following requests:
    - the request by the Monegasque delegation to add:
      - Madame Christine Pasquier-Ciulla (EPP/CD) to the Sub-committee on human rights and the Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights
    - the request by the Greek delegation to:
      - replace Mr Evripidis Styliandis (EPP/CD) with Ms Anna Efthymiou (EPP/CD) as a titular member on the Sub-Committee on Human Rights
      - replace Ms Anna Efthymiou (EPP/CD) with Mr Evripidis Styliandis (EPP/CD) as a titular member on the Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights
    - the request by the Polish delegation to add:
      - Ms Kamila Gasiuk-Pihowicz (EPP/CD) to the Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights as soon as a seat becomes available;
    - The request by the Dutch delegation to add:
      - Ms Gala Veldhoen (SOC) to the Sub-Committee on Artificial Intelligence and Human Rights and to the Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights, the latter when a seat becomes available;

- on Wednesday 17 April 2024 at 10.30am, as regards:
  - **Debate under urgent procedure on “The arbitrary detention of Vladimir Kara-Murza and the systematic persecution of anti-war protesters in the Russian Federation and Belarus”** (*Rapporteur: Ms Thórhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC)*): noted that no amendments had been tabled;
  - **Sanctions of persons on the “Kara-Murza list”** (*Rapporteur: Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross (Estonia, ALDE)*): noted that no amendments had been tabled;
  - **Reply to Recommendation 2261 on “Call for the immediate release of Osman Kavala”**: heard an update on the situation provided by the Rapporteur for follow-up, Ms Petra Bayr (Austria, SOC);
  - **Ad hoc committee of the Bureau to visit the ICRC headquarters in Geneva in the framework of the follow-up to Resolution 2529 (2024) on “The situation of the children of Ukraine”**: agreed to propose the following members to the Bureau to participate in this ad hoc committee: Ms Lesia Vasylenko (Ukraine, ALDE) and Ms Lucia Plaváková (Slovak Republic, ALDE) as titular members and Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland, ALDE) as substitute with the proviso that the date, when confirmed, is convenient for them;
  - **Participation of members in conferences, meetings, seminars etc**: heard oral reports on the following events by the appointed representatives listed below:
 

Committee of Experts on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law (PC-ENV), Strasbourg, 27-29 February 2024: oral report by Mr Constantinos Efstathiou (Cyprus, SOC);

Committee on Artificial Intelligence (CAI), Strasbourg, 13-14 March 2024: oral report by Ms Thórhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC);

138th Plenary Session of the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, Venice (Italy) 15-16 March 2024: oral report by Mr Antonio Gutiérrez Limones (Spain, SOC);

Committee of Legal Advisers on Public International Law (CAHDI) [Seminar on the Special Tribunal for the Crime of Aggression against Ukraine](#), Strasbourg, 10 April 2024: oral report by Lord Richard Keen (United Kingdom, EC/DA);
  - **Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2024**: noted the closing date for nominations on 30 April 2024 and the details available on the [Václav Havel Human Rights Prize website](#);
  - **Debate under urgent procedure on “Alexei Navalny’s death and the need to counter Vladimir Putin’s totalitarian regime and its war on democracy”** (*Rapporteur: Mr Emanuelis Zingeris (Lithuania, EPP/CD)*): took position on 13 amendments to the draft resolution and agreed to an oral amendment as an alternative to amendment no.6;
- on Thursday 18 April 2024 at 8.30am, as regards:
  - **Sub-Committee on Human Rights**: heard a report by the Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the meeting held on Wednesday 17 April 2024 and endorsed its proposal, to be submitted to the Bureau, to reject the list of candidates to the CPT submitted in 2023 by the Polish delegation on procedural grounds; noted the postponement of the consideration of the list submitted by the delegation of the Slovak Republic;
  - **Debate under urgent procedure on the Draft Framework Convention on Artificial Intelligence, Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law** (*Rapporteur: Ms Thórhildur Sunna Ævarsdóttir (Iceland, SOC)*): noted that no amendments had been tabled to this opinion;
  - **Hearings during the next meeting**: agreed to hold a hearing at the next meeting on “Transnational repression as a growing threat to the rule of law and human rights” (*Rapporteur for follow-up: Sir Christopher Chope, United Kingdom, EC/DA*) with invited experts, subject to the availability of funds (open to the public provided that all experts agree);

– **Other business**

- **Reference extensions:** agreed to request the Bureau for extensions to the following references until 31 December 2024:
  - Threats to life and safety of journalists and human rights defenders in Azerbaijan (Rapporteur: Ms Hannah Bardell, UK, NR)
  - Legal aspects of the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights (Rapporteur: Mr Titus Corlăţean, Romania, SOC);
- **Authorisation of participation of members at forthcoming events:**
  - Committee of Experts on the Protection of Lawyers (to be held on 13-15 May, in Strasbourg): agreed for Sir Christopher Chope (United Kingdom, EC/DA) to attend, subject to the availability of funds;
- **Next meetings:** agreed to a request by the Committee on the Honouring and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe to swap the dates of the September meeting which will now be held on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2024 in Paris instead of 11 September 2024 as originally foreseen;

*Plenary Committee:*

- 21 May 2024, Paris Office
- during the Assembly's 3<sup>rd</sup> part-session of 2024 (24-28 June 2024)
- 10 September 2023, Paris Office
- during the Assembly's 4<sup>th</sup> part-session of 2024 (30<sup>th</sup> September – 4 October 2024)
- 10 December 2024, Paris Office (t.b.c.)

*Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights:*

- 4-5 July 2024, Tirana - Sub-Committee on the implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

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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 Wednesday 17 April 2024, at 11.55am, with Lord Richard Keen (United Kingdom, EC/DA), *ex officio* member and Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights in the Chair, as regards:

- **Election of the Sub-Committee's Vice-Chairperson:** decided to postpone the election to a future meeting;
- **Update and discussion of the proposed meeting of the Sub-Committee in Tirana:** noted the provisional agenda of the forthcoming meeting to be held in Tirana on 4-5 July 2024;
- **Next meeting:** 4-5 July 2024, Tirana.

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**The Sub-Committee on Human Rights** (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), meeting on Wednesday 17 April 2024 at 12.15pm, with Ms Octavie Modert (Luxembourg, EPP/CD) in the Chair;

- **European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT):** noted the postponement of the consideration of the list of candidates to the CPT submitted by the delegation of the Slovak

Republic; agreed to recommend to the plenary committee that the list of candidates submitted in 2023 by the Polish delegation be rejected on procedural grounds;

- **Next meeting:** during the June part-session 2024.

Günter Schirmer, Guillem Cano-Palomares, George Stafford, Rafał Sokół

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

