Resolution 844 (1985)[1]

Introduction of Assembly debates on current affairs

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Considering the eminently political role it plays, as representative of parliamentary opinion in democratic Europe ;

2. Considering that it consequently has a duty to express the concern felt in parliamentary circles over current events in Europe and other parts of the world ;

3. Considering that its present work arrangements make it difficult to hold debates on events making the headlines which may occur suddenly ;

4. Anxious to continue to work thoroughly and conscientiously, avoiding improvisation and over-hasty decisions,

5. Resolves to introduce the following "current affairs debate" procedure for a trial period of two years :

a. In the course of each part-session one "current affairs" debate may be held if proposed by the Bureau to the Assembly ;

b. The request for a current affairs debate must be submitted to the Bureau by at least two political groups and at least two national delegations, and must be tabled five days before the opening of the part-session ;

c. A choice, if there are several requests, shall be made by the Bureau of the Assembly, but the Bureau may decide not to propose any ;

d. A current affairs debate may not be devoted to any item already appearing on the agenda for the part-session ;

e. A current affairs debate may not exceed one-and-a-half hours in length, and speaking time shall be limited to five minutes for all members except the first speaker, who shall be allowed ten minutes ;

f. At the close of the current affairs debate, the Assembly shall not pronounce on any texts, although the question at issue may be referred by the Bureau to the appropriate committee for a report at a later stage, and written declarations (Rule 48 of the Rules of Procedure) may be tabled ;

6. Instructs the Committee on Rules of Procedure to monitor current affairs debates and report to it at the conclusion of the trial period with a view to including provisions relating to current affairs debates in its Rules of Procedure, if appropriate.

1. See Doc. 5412, report of the Committee on Rules of Procedure. Text adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 4 July 1985.