



Resolution 1822 (2011)¹

Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe is a unique interparliamentary assembly which can pride itself on a number of achievements during its sixty years of existence.
2. Looking to the future, the Assembly has decided that the time has come to take stock of the current context in which it operates and to reaffirm its mission. The continuing challenges and unresolved conflicts in Europe and the events over the last few months in the Middle East and northern Africa have been a reminder of the constant, inspirational force of the fundamental values upheld by the Council of Europe and its Assembly, namely democracy, human rights and the rule of law. In addition, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe himself, with the strong backing of the member states, embarked on an ambitious programme of reform of the Organisation in October 2009.
3. The aim of the reform of the Assembly is to strengthen its political relevance and effectiveness, to make it more visible and to increase its members' involvement. In addition, the objective is also to reinforce the interaction between the Assembly and national parliaments and to strengthen interparliamentary co-operation, including with the European Parliament.
4. To this end, the Assembly has decided to take a number of measures, ranging from policy actions, which imply a change of practice but not necessarily a change of rules, to modifications of its working methods and structures, which will imply a change to its Rules of Procedure.
5. The Assembly therefore decides, as regards policy actions:
 - 5.1. motions for a resolution or a recommendation:
 - 5.1.1. to use the four lines of action adopted at the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe held in Warsaw in May 2005 as selection criteria for motions;
 - 5.1.2. to allow committees to table motions under Rule 24.2 of the Rules of Procedure and the Bureau to propose reports for debate in the Assembly (constituting references), while at the same time being more selective in the topics they propose;
 - 5.1.3. to modify the requirements for tabling an application to initiate a monitoring procedure, by requiring 20 signatories belonging to 6 national delegations and 2 political groups;
 - 5.1.4. to make explicit in the Rules of Procedure the various options which committees have when a motion is referred to them for information;
 - 5.2. follow-up to adopted texts:
 - 5.2.1. to allow rapporteurs for reports, together with the relevant committee, to continue to be seized for one year after the adoption of the text to ensure its follow-up, and to report back to the committee at the end of that period, as well as to proceed, when appropriate, in accordance with the mechanism set out in [Resolution 1640 \(2008\)](#) on use by Assembly members of their dual parliamentary role – both national and European;

1. Assembly debate on 22 June 2011 (24th Sitting) (see [Doc. 12627](#), report of the ad hoc Committee on the Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly, rapporteur: Mr Mignon). Text adopted by the Assembly on 22 June 2011 (24th Sitting).



- 5.2.2. to invite committees to draw up an annual report on the follow-up given to adopted texts by the national parliaments and/or the Committee of Ministers and, where necessary, to make a public statement when the follow-up is not satisfactory;
 - 5.3. debates in the plenary Assembly:
 - 5.3.1. to introduce one "free debate" during each part-session;
 - 5.3.2. to allow amendments to draft resolutions and/or recommendations to be tabled together with explanatory notes;
 - 5.4. grouping and long-term planning of committee meetings:
 - 5.4.1. outside part-sessions, to group committee meetings during periods of the year fixed a year in advance;
 - 5.4.2. during part-sessions, to avoid as far as possible simultaneous committee meetings involving the same members;
 - 5.4.3. to invite the committees of the Assembly, except the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe and the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, to use their "annual ticket" to organise a joint meeting with their counterpart committees in the national parliaments of the member states;
 - 5.5. Assembly communication tools: to review the Assembly's communication tools, in particular its website, with a view to making them more user-friendly and interactive, and thus more useful to members and to Europeans;
 - 5.6. fundraising: to diversify the funding of the Assembly's actions (other than statutory activities) and new initiatives through external sources compatible with the values and principles of the Council of Europe;
 - 5.7. follow-up on structural issues regarding election observations: to establish an advisory group on election observation, preferably under the President and appointed by political groups, with the responsibility of summing up and systematising structural experiences with other international election observation institutions.
6. Furthermore, the Assembly decides, as concerns the modification of its working methods and structures:
- 6.1. regarding the organisation of Assembly part-sessions, to invite the Bureau of the Assembly:
 - 6.1.1. to reduce the maximum speaking time for members on the speakers' lists to four minutes or, where necessary, to three minutes;
 - 6.1.2. in principle, to foresee a minimum of two hours for debates, except current affairs debates, which remain limited to an hour and a half;
 - 6.1.3. in principle, not to cut any list of speakers and to seek to ensure a fair geographical and political distribution;
 - 6.1.4. to have committee meetings on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 2 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.;
 - 6.2. regarding substitutes and alternates: to eliminate the requirement that committee chairpersons or vice-chairpersons must be full members of the committee, not alternates;
 - 6.3. regarding the Sub-Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights: to invite the sub-committee to give positive reasons for its recommendation in favour of a given candidate;
 - 6.4. regarding the committee structure:
 - 6.4.1. to merge the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development (AS/Ec), the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee (AS/Soc) and the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs (AS/Ena) into one Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development (AS/CSD);

6.4.2. as a result, to transfer budgetary and financial matters from the Committee AS/Ec to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs (AS/Pro), and the preparation of the reports on the activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to the Political Affairs Committee (AS/Pol);

6.4.3. taking account of the new responsibilities of the Committee AS/Pro, to nominate as *ex officio* members the chairpersons of the Assembly's five political groups and to increase the number of members with a view to ensuring an equitable geographical representation of members. With this in mind each member state shall not have more than one member on this committee;

6.4.4. to transform the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men (AS/Ega) into the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination (AS/Ega);

6.4.5. as a result, to transfer issues relating to the rights of national and other minorities and to discrimination on any ground from the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to the new Committee AS/Ega;

6.4.6. to transfer the issue of population from the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population (AS/Mig) to the new Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development and, consequently, to modify the title and the terms of reference of AS/Mig;

6.4.7. to limit each member of the Assembly to full membership of two committees, with the exception of the committees whose members are nominated by the political groups;

6.4.8. to prepare revised terms of reference for the following eight general committees:

6.4.8.1. Political Affairs Committee (AS/Pol);

6.4.8.2. Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (AS/Jur);

6.4.8.3. Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development (AS/CSD);

6.4.8.4. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons (AS/Mig);

6.4.8.5. Committee on Culture, Science and Education (AS/Cult);

6.4.8.6. Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination (AS/Ega);

6.4.8.7. Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) (AS/Mon);

6.4.8.8. Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs (AS/Pro).

7. The Assembly decides that the measures contained in this resolution shall come into effect at the opening of the 2012 Ordinary Session of the Assembly, on 23 January 2012. A separate report by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs will be submitted to the Assembly or the Standing Committee in good time before the opening of the 2012 Ordinary Session concerning the necessary modifications of the Rules of Procedure, which shall include: revised terms of reference of committees, including the implementation of the proposal that the Assembly should be able to consider "deep security" issues, transitional arrangements and recent issues relating to the interpretation of the Rules such as committees' standing mandates and deadlines for the preparation of reports. As regards standing mandates, it will be necessary to give them a firm legal basis in the Rules.