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Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (29 January – 11 April 2011)

Progress report

Bureau of the Assembly

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1. Introduction

1. On 28 January 2011, the Bureau appointed me rapporteur for this report. Since the last part session of the Assembly, the Bureau has met in Paris on 10 March 2011. The Standing Committee met in Paris on 11 March 2011.

2. In line with my predecessors, this progress report covers the period outside of Assembly part-sessions, leaving aside the decisions which have already been ratified by the Assembly. Thus, the first part of this report presents the Bureau's activities since the part-session of January 2011 and up until the April part-session and the activities of the Standing Committee of 11 March 2011 are presented in the second part of the report. I hope that this will enable Assembly members to keep abreast of our activities outside of part-sessions.



3. The Bureau will hold its next meetings on Monday 11 April 2011 at 8 am and Friday 15 April 2011 at 8.30 am (Strasbourg, part session) then on 26 May 2011 at 2.30 pm (Kyiv, Ukraine). The next meeting of the Standing Committee will be held in Kyiv on 27 May 2011.

2. Activities of the Bureau since the last part session

2.1. Assembly reform

4. At its meeting on 10 March 2011, the Bureau held an exchange of views on the draft report on the Assembly's reform. The Bureau also took note of the appointment of Mrs Bemelmans-Videc (Netherlands; EPP/CD) to replace Mr Haibach on this ad hoc Committee of the Assembly.

2.2. Co-operation with the European Parliament

5. On 10 March 2011, the Bureau formally established an ad hoc Committee to participate in the joint informal body to co-ordinate information sharing in the context of the accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights, to be co-Chaired by the Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the Chairperson of the Committee on Political Affairs.

6. The first meeting of this joint informal body was held on 14 March 2011 in Brussels and the second is scheduled for 15 June 2011 in Paris.

2.3. Ad hoc committees of the Bureau for the observation of elections and referenda

2.3.1. Kazakhstan: early presidential election (3 April 2011)

7. At its meeting on 10 March 2011, the Bureau confirmed the proposal to observe that election; constituted an ad hoc Committee composed of five members (one from each political group); and appointed Mrs Liovochkina (Ukraine; EDG) as its Chairperson.

2.3.2. Turkey: parliamentary elections (12 June 2011)

8. At its meeting on 10 March 2011, the Bureau decided, subject to the receipt of an invitation from the competent Turkish authorities, to observe these elections; constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 30 members in accordance with the d'Hondt system (10 EPP/CD; 9 SOC; 5 ALDE; 5 EDG; 1 UEL); and authorised a pre-electoral mission composed of five members (one from each political group) – to be carried out approximately one month before the elections.

2.4. Other ad hoc committees of the Bureau

9. On 10 March 2011, the Bureau constituted a Bureau ad hoc committee to participate in the thematic meeting of the Forum to be held in Cyprus on 13 and 14 October 2011 on the subject "The Interdependence of democracy and Social cohesion" and appointed the Head of the Cypriot delegation in office at the time of the event as the ad hoc Committee's Chairperson for 2011.

10. Also on 10 March 2011, the Bureau decided to establish an ad hoc committee of the Bureau on recent detentions, prosecutions and convictions of members of the opposition in Belarus. This ad hoc committee would be composed of one representative per political group who is not a member of the Bureau.

2.5. Follow-up to texts adopted during the first ordinary part session of the Assembly in 2011 (Strasbourg, 24-28 January 2011)

11. On 10 March 2011:

- Regarding Resolution 1783 (2011) on "Follow-up to the reform of the Council of Europe", the Bureau asked the Ad hoc Committee on the Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly to take into account the decisions set out in paragraphs 9, 12, 17 and 18 in its work. Moreover, the Bureau asked the committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to take paragraph 12.2 into account in its report on "Accession of the European Union to the European Convention on Human Rights: Election of Judges" (Rapporteur S. Holovaty, Ukraine, ALDE). The Bureau also requested the Committee on Culture, Science and Education to make proposals to the Bureau regarding the organisation of a new Youth Forum in

Strasbourg. Finally, the Bureau asked the Assembly's committees to reinforce their dialogue with the European Parliament and to examine the activities and programmes of the Council of Europe falling within the scope of their mandates in order to evaluate their political relevance.

- Regarding Resolution 1786 (2011) on “Reconciliation and political dialogue between the countries of the former Yugoslavia”, the Bureau asked the Assembly's committees to take this dialogue into account in their work.
- Regarding Resolution 1787 (2011) on “Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights”, the Bureau decided to ask the President of the Parliamentary Assembly to send a letter to the Chairpersons of national parliamentary delegations of the states concerned.
- Regarding Resolution 1790 (2011) on “The situation in Belarus in the aftermath of the presidential election”, the Bureau asked the Assembly's committees to take this dialogue into account in their work.
- Regarding Resolution 1792 (2011) on “Monitoring of commitments concerning social rights”, the Bureau asked the Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs to take into account the decisions set out in sub-paragraphs 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 in its work.

2.6. Issues raised by committees

2.6.1. Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

12. The Bureau held an exchange of views on a memorandum on gender mainstreaming in the work of the Assembly and agreed to return to this subject at its meeting on 15 April 2011.

2.6.2. Political Affairs Committee

13. The Bureau authorised the Committee to prepare a report on the subject “Living together in 21st Century Europe: follow-up to the Eminent Persons report” to be debated at the Assembly's June 2011 part-session, with the following Committees being seized for opinion: Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs; the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population; the Committee on Culture, Science and Education; and the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

14. The Bureau authorised Mr Kox, Rapporteur for “Request for Partner for Democracy Status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Palestinian National Council (PNC)”, to conduct a fact-finding visit to the Palestinian Territories, including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, if possible, at the end of March for the purposes of his report.

15. The Bureau authorised the Committee to prepare a report on “Situation in Tunisia” for debate at the Assembly's June 2011 part session, and authorised the Rapporteur to carry out a fact-finding visit to Tunisia for the purposes of her report.

2.7. Requests for extensions of references

16. On 10 March 2011, the Bureau approved the following extensions:

- Doc. 11843, Motion for a Recommendation *The Council of Europe and the Eastern Partnership of the European Union*, to the Political Affairs Committee for report (reference no. 3539), extension until 31 December 2011.
- Doc. 11892, Motion for a Resolution *The need for independent and credible environmental assessments*, Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs for report (reference no. 3562), extension until 30 November 2011.
- Doc. 11894, Motion for a recommendation *The potential dangers of electromagnetic fields and their effect on the environment*, Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs for report (reference No. 3563), extension until 30 November 2011.

2.8. Parliamentary Assembly Human Rights Prize

17. On 28 January 2011, in accordance with the regulations for the Prize, the Bureau approved the Recommendation submitted by the Selection Panel proposing the Russian NGO “Committee against torture” as the winner.

The Assembly is invited to endorse this decision.

2.9. Other business

18. The Bureau awarded Mr Lluís Maria de Puig, former President of the Assembly, the title of Honorary President of the Assembly, with effect from the date that he ceases to be a member of the Assembly; and conferred the title of Honorary Secretary General of the Assembly on Mr Mateo Sorinas, former Secretary General of the Assembly, with effect from 1 April 2011.

19. The Bureau took note of the dates of the *European Conference of Presidents of Parliament*, to take place in Strasbourg from 7-9 June 2012.

3. Activities of the Standing Committee (Paris, 11 March 2011)

20. The Standing Committee held a current affairs debate on “Co-operation between the Council of Europe and emerging democracies in the Arab world” introduced by Mr Kox (Netherlands, UEL), with the participation of Mr Dominique Baudis, President of the Arab World Institute and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament.

21. Following debates, the Standing Committee, adopted, on behalf of the Assembly, the texts appearing in the attached list, which are available on the Assembly website.

22. The Standing Committee ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Bulgaria and Germany.

23. The Standing Committee ratified the changes in the composition of Assembly committees in respect of the delegations of Armenia, France and Poland, and the change in the composition of the Ad hoc Committee on the Reform of the Parliamentary Assembly.

24. The Standing Committee ratified the proposal by the Bureau of March 2011, to set up an ad hoc committee of the Bureau on recent detentions, prosecutions and convictions of members of the opposition in Belarus. This ad hoc committee would be composed of one member of each political group who is not a member of the Bureau.

25. On 10 March, the Bureau approved the following references, ratified the following day by the Standing Committee.

- [Doc. 12490](#), Motion for a resolution on *Serious setbacks in the fields of the rule of law and human rights in Hungary*, to the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) to prepare a written opinion in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 of the terms of reference of the Monitoring Committee.
- [Doc. 12491](#), Motion for a resolution on *The situation of women in Ukraine*, to the Committee on the Honouring of *Obligations* and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on Honouring of obligations and commitments by Ukraine and to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for information.
- [Doc. 12492 rev.](#) Motion for a recommendation *Towards a Council of Europe Convention to combat trafficking in organs, tissues and cells of human origin* to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee for report.
- [Doc. 12495](#), Motion for a resolution *Investing in a low-carbon economy for growth and development*, to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development for report and to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs for opinion.
- [Doc. 12498](#), Motion for a resolution *Integration of migrants: is Europe failing?* to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population for report.
- *Granting of participatory status to the international non-governmental organisation Andante* to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education for report at the Standing Committee and to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for opinion.
- Bureau decision on *The situation in Tunisia*, to the Political Affairs Committee for report.
- Follow-up to the current affairs debate on *Co-operation between the Council of Europe and emerging democracies in the Arab world*, to the Political Affairs Committee for report.

- Bureau decision, *Living together in 21st century Europe: follow-up to the Eminent Persons report* to the Political Affairs Committee for report and to the following committees for opinion: Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee; Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population; Committee on Culture, Science and Education; and Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men.

Appendix 1 – Texts adopted by the Standing Committee (Paris, 11 March 2011)

- [Opinion 280 \(2011\)](#), Opinion on the draft Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
- [Resolution 1794 \(2011\)](#) Preserving the environment in the Mediterranean
- [Resolution 1795 \(2011\)](#) Genetically modified organisms: a solution for the future?
- [Resolution 1796 \(2011\)](#) Young offenders: social measures, education and rehabilitation
- [Resolution 1797 \(2011\)](#) and [Recommendation 1960 \(2011\)](#) The need for a global consideration of the human rights implications of biometrics
- [Resolution 1798 \(2011\)](#) Fair representation of the political parties or groups of national parliaments in their delegations to the Parliamentary Assembly
- [Resolution 1799 \(2011\)](#) Code of conduct for rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly

Appendix 2 – Meetings elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris authorised by the Bureau

1-2 June 2011, Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, Corfu (Greece).

Appendix 3 – Appointments of Assembly representatives for official activities

- Ms Annette Groth (Germany, UEL), Plenary Assembly of the European Roma and Travellers Forum, Strasbourg, 30 March 2011;
- A Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights (according to availability), High-level follow-up conference on the Future of the European Court of Human Rights, Izmir (Turkey), 26-27 April 2011;
- Ms Dzhema Grozdanova (Bulgaria, EPP/CD), Spring Session of NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Varna (Bulgaria), 27-30 May 2011 at no cost for the Assembly.

Appendix 4 – Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly on the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) in 2011

The Bureau appointed the following representatives: Mrs Lundgren (ALDE, Political Affairs Committee), Mr Čilevičs (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) and Mr Schneider (EPP/CD, Committee on Culture, Science and Education).