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Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the Standing Committee (5 October 2007-17 December 2007)

Progress report[1]
Bureau of the Assembly
Rapporteur: Mr René van der LINDEN, Netherlands, Group of the European People's Party

1. Introduction

1. The Bureau met on 5 October in Strasbourg, on 22 November in Bratislava and on 17 December in Paris. The Standing Committee met on 23 November in Bratislava.

2. Functioning of the Assembly

2.1. Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the Standing Committee (5 October 2007 to 21 January 2008)

2. On 5 October, the Bureau appointed Mr van der Linden (Netherlands, EPP/CD) as rapporteur.

2.2. Fourth part of the 2007 Ordinary Session (Strasbourg, 1-5 October 2007)

2.2.1. Follow-up to the texts adopted

3. On 5 October, the Bureau was informed by the Secretary General of the Assembly about the follow-up to be given to the texts adopted during the part-session.

2.2.2. Current affairs debate on "The looming crisis facing the European Court of Human Rights: urgent action needed"

4. On 5 October, in accordance with Rule 52.5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Bureau decided to refer this matter to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report*.

2.3. First part of the 2008 Ordinary Session (Strasbourg, 21-25 January 2008)

5. On 5 October, the Bureau took note of a preliminary draft agenda and a provisional list of guest speakers.

6. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– adopted the draft agenda;

– drew up a preliminary draft order of business;

1. [Instantiation]

– following a proposal by the Political Affairs Committee, agreed to invite Mr Bouteflika, President of the Algerian Republic, to address the Assembly.

7. On 17 December, the Bureau:

– updated the draft agenda and the draft order of business;

– agreed to invite Mr Frans Timmermans, Minister for European Affairs for the Netherlands, to address the Assembly.

2.4. Standing Committee (Bratislava, 23 November 2007)

8. On 5 October, the Bureau took note of a draft agenda and a draft programme.

9. On 22 November, the Bureau updated the draft agenda.

10. On 23 November, the Standing Committee:

– adopted a declaration on “Involvement of men – a crucial factor for change to combat violence against women”, in the framework of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November 2007) (see the Assembly website);

– heard a welcome address by Mr Pavol Paška, Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic;

– held an exchange of views with Mr Ján Kubiš, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers;

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Belgium, Greece, Ireland and the Netherlands;

– ratified the changes in the composition of general Assembly committees in respect of the delegations of Belgium, Greece and Ireland;

– ratified the references and modifications of references proposed by the Bureau.

2.5. Follow-up to the Standing Committee (Bratislava, 23 November 2007)

11. On 17 December, the Bureau:

– agreed to modify the “Additional provisions relating to Assembly debates” (pages 88-99 in the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, 2006 Edition) following the adoption of Resolution 1583 (2007) on improving the participation of members in Assembly plenary sessions and committee meetings and Resolution 1584 (2007) on application and amendment of various provisions of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure;

– took note of the follow-up as proposed by the Secretary General of the Assembly to Resolution 1589 (2007) on co-operation between the Assembly and the Conference of INGOs and to Resolution 1593 (2007) in favour of a Parliamentary Assembly “Gender Equality Prize”.

2.6. Adopted texts

12. On 23 November, the Standing Committee adopted, on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly, the following texts:

– Opinion 266 (2007) on the draft convention of the Council of Europe on the adoption of children (revised)

– Resolution 1583 (2007) on improving the participation of members in Assembly plenary sessions and committee meetings

– Resolution 1584 (2007) on the application and amendment of various provisions of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure

– Resolution 1585 (2007) on gender equality principles in the Parliamentary Assembly

– Resolution 1586 (2007) on Europe’s response to humanitarian disasters

– Resolution 1587 (2007) on the situation of children living in post-conflict zones in the Balkans

– Resolution 1588 (2007) on radioactive waste and protection of the environment

– Resolution 1589 (2007) on co-operation between the Assembly and the Conference of INGOs

– Resolution 1590 (2007) on secret ballot – European code of conduct on secret balloting, including guidelines for politicians, observers and voters

– Resolution 1591 (2007) on distance voting

– Resolution 1592 (2007) on the Code of Good Practice on Referendums

– Resolution 1593 (2007) on in favour of a Parliamentary Assembly "Gender Equality Prize"

– Resolution 1594 (2007) on the principle of the rule of law

– Recommendation 1818 (2007) on activities and orientations of the Council of Europe Development Bank

– Recommendation 1819 (2007) on gender equality principles in the Parliamentary Assembly

– Recommendation 1820 (2007) on co-operation between the Assembly and the Conference of INGOs

– Recommendation 1821 (2007) on the Code of Good Practice on Referendums.

2.7. Follow-up to paragraph 14 of the Resolution 1535 (2007) on threats to the lives and freedom of expression of journalists

13. On 22 November, the Bureau noted that the Committee on Culture, Science and Education has appointed Mr McIntosh (United Kingdom, SOC) to follow this subject.

2.8. Follow-up to Assembly Recommendation 1599 (2003) on the cultural situation in the South Caucasus

14. On 17 December, the Bureau took note of a statement by Mr Legendre, Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, on the unaccomplished study visit by Mr O'Hara to the region.

2.9. Requests for debate under urgent procedure: criteria for selection

15. On 5 October, the Bureau approved the proposals contained in a memorandum prepared by the secretariat on this matter.

2.10. References and transmissions to committees

16. On 5 October, the Bureau approved the following references and modifications of references which were ratified by the Assembly later that day:

2.10.1. references to committees

a. Doc. 11378

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Ojuland and others, The situation of Aung San Suu Kyi, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for information*

b. Doc. 11379

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Ateş and others, Need for a Council of Europe Neighbourhood policy, to the Political Affairs Committee, for report

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Promoting common fundamental values: human rights, rule of law and democracy; Promoting fundamental European values in neighbouring areas]

c. Current affairs debate on "The looming crisis facing the European Court of Human Rights: urgent action needed": according to Rule 52.5 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*

2.10.2. reply after consultation

a. Doc. 11327

Motion for a resolution presented by Ms Muttonen and others, Cultural education: the promotion of cultural knowledge, creativity and intercultural understanding through education, to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, *for report*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Developing intercultural and inter-religious dialogue]

2.10.3. extension of a reference

a. Doc. 10715

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Van den Brande and others, Precarious situation of national minorities in the Voivodina province of Serbia and Montenegro

Reference No. 3147 of 25 November 2005 – Validity: 25 November 2007, extension until 31 January 2008

17. On 23 November, the Standing Committee ratified the following references and modifications of references proposed by the Bureau:

2.10.4. references to committees

a. Doc. 11399 (Reference No. 3381)

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Cliveti and others, Centenary of the birth of Simone de Beauvoir (2008): VIPs committed to promoting equality between women and men, to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for information*

b. Doc. 11400 (Reference No. 3382)

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Pernaska and others, For a Europe-wide sex offenders register, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*, and to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, *for opinion*

c. Doc. 11401 (Reference No. 3383)

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Vermot-Mangold and others, The role of parliamentarians in promoting the rapid entry into force of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and its ratification by as many states as possible, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report at the Standing Committee meeting on 14 March 2008*, and to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for opinion*

d. Doc. 11402 (Reference No. 3384)

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Sasi and others, The role and relevance of the world economic institutions in an era of globalisation, to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, *for report*

e. Doc. 11404 (Reference No. 3385)

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Bemelmans-Videc and others, Allegations of politically-motivated abuses of the criminal justice system in Council of Europe member states, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*, and to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, *for opinion*

f. Doc. 11172 (Reference No. 3329)

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Gross and others, Request for an investigation to clarify the allegedly suspicious death of former President Boris Trajkovski of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*

2.10.5. extension of references

a. Doc. 10717

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Cortajarena and others, Immigration from Sub-Saharan Africa

Reference No. 3148 of 25 November 2005 – validity: 25 November 2007, extension until 30 May 2008

b. Doc. 10536

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Torosyan and others, Imvros and Tenedos

Reference No. 3171 of 27 January 2006 – validity: 27 January 2008, extension until 30 June 2008

c. Doc. 10782

Letter by Mr Mercan, Riots in European Cities: lessons and Council of Europe response

Reference No. 3166 of 23 January 2006 – validity: 23 January 2008, extension until 30 June 2008

d. Doc. 10640

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Jurgens and others, Legal recognition of same-sex partnerships in Europe

Reference No. 3134 of 1 September 2005 – validity: 31 December 2007 (extended on 25 June 2007), extension until 31 March 2008

e. Doc. 10714

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Pourgourides and others, Freedom of religion and other human rights for non-Muslim minorities in Turkey

Doc. 10724

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Mercan and others, The plight of the Turkish Muslim minorities in Western Thrace, Greece

Reference No. 3203 of 17 March 2006 – validity: 31 March 2008, extension until 31 December 2008.

2.11. Annual debate on the "State of human rights and democracy in Europe"

18. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– endorsed the conclusions reached at the meeting held during the part-session between the president and the chairpersons of the Political Affairs Committee, the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the Monitoring Committee;

– agreed to return to this matter at its next meeting in order to fix the main focus of next year's report and debate and in particular the possibility of observing a yearly alternation between the themes of democracy and human rights.

19. On 22 November, the Bureau asked the chairpersons of the Political Affairs Committee and the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to propose specific themes for the 2008 debate so as to enable the Bureau to take a decision at its next meeting on 17 December 2007.

20. On 17 December, the Bureau:

– agreed, as part of an annual alternation between the themes of "Democracy" and "Human Rights", to devote its June 2008 debate to the "State of democracy in Europe", and more specifically to the themes of "Political aspects of migration" and "Assessment of the quality of democracy" as proposed by the Political Affairs Committee;

– agreed that the 2009 debate would take up the issue of the "State of human rights in Europe", with specific themes to be proposed in due course by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

2.12. "Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly Human Rights Prize"

21. On 22 November, the Bureau held a preliminary discussion and agreed to return to the matter at its next meeting.

22. On 17 December, the Bureau approved the revised draft regulations for the prize.

2.13. Follow-up to the 3rd Summit

2.13.1. Draft co-operation agreement between the Assembly and the European Parliament:

23. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– agreed to the draft co-operation agreement as amended by the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament;

– noted that the president would sign the agreement together with the President of the European Parliament on 28 November 2007.

2.13.2. Forum for the Future of Democracy

24. On 22 November, the Bureau took note of the summary and conclusions of the meeting of the Advisory Board on the Forum on the Future of Democracy which took place on 5 October as well as the revised guidelines.

2.14. Ad hoc committee on the implementation of Resolution 1416 (2005) on the conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference

25. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– was informed by Lord Russell-Johnston, chairman of the ad hoc committee, that the visit to Nagorno-Karabakh by the ad hoc committee, which had been scheduled for 8-12 October 2007, had been cancelled; and that it was the intention of the ad hoc committee to organise interparliamentary conferences in Baku and Yerevan on parliamentary co-operation between the two countries;

– within the framework of the preparation of the above-mentioned conference, authorised Lord Russell-Johnston to visit Baku and Yerevan.

2.15. Ad hoc sub-committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights

26. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– authorised the establishment of a sub-committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights as a fourth standing sub-committee of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights;

– authorised a derogation from the rule on multiple memberships of sub-committees for members of the above-mentioned sub-committee.

2.16. Motion for a resolution on the request for an investigation to clarify the allegedly suspicious death of former President Trajkovski of the "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia"

27. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– took note of an information note on this matter prepared by Mr Gross on behalf of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, and decided to declassify it;

– following a proposal contained in the above-mentioned information note, invited the delegation of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" to propose to the Macedonian Parliament the setting up of a committee of inquiry into the death of former President Trajkovski;

– referred the motion for a resolution to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for a report.

2.17. Vote on the appointment of a rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee on developments as regards the future status of Kosovo

28. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– agreed to set up an ad hoc committee of five members (to be appointed by each political group among members of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) to investigate this matter;

– was informed that the president would send a letter to the chairpersons of all Assembly Committees asking them to follow the procedure to be proposed by the tellers of the Political Affairs Committee for the conduct of future votes by secret ballot.

29. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– agreed that the ad hoc committee should be composed as follows: Mr Prescott (United Kingdom, SOC); Mr Mota Amaral (Portugal, EPP/CD); Ms Lavtižar-Bebler (Slovenia, ALDE); Mr Malins (United Kingdom, EDG); and Mr Laakso (Finland, UEL);

– recommended that the ad hoc committee meet before the end of 2007 under the chairmanship of Mr Mota Amaral.

30. On 17 December, the Bureau took note of the intention of the ad hoc committee set up to investigate this matter to meet during the January 2008 part-session of the Assembly.

2.18. Conferences

2.18.1. Joint conference in 2008 of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (St Petersburg, 4 April 2008)

31. On 5 October, the Bureau took note of the preparations for the Conference; agreed that its general theme should be that of migration and agreed that it takes place on 4 April in St Petersburg.

2.18.2. European Conference of Presidents of Parliaments (Strasbourg, 22-23 May 2008)

32. On 22 November, the Bureau approved the draft programme of the conference.

2.19. Composition of the Monitoring Committee

33. On 5 October, the Bureau approved new members as proposed by political groups for ratification by the Assembly: Mr Harutyunyan (Armenia, EDG); Mr Laakso (Finland, UEL); and Mr Mooney (Ireland, ALDE).

2.20. Assembly Representatives for official activities

2.20.1. Appointment of Assembly Representatives for official activities

34. On 5 October, in reply to formal invitations, the Bureau nominated the following Representatives:

a. Mr Biberaj (Albania, EPP/CD): International Forum of Civil Society, Paris, 25 October 2007;

b. Mr Dačić (Serbia, SOC): 67th Rose-Roth Seminar “Serbia and Europe: Together or Apart”, Belgrade (Serbia), 25-27 October 2007;

c. Mr Bokeria (Georgia, ALDE): Tbilisi Summit 2007 “Building Europe’s East and fact-finding trip”, Tbilisi (Georgia), 1-4 November 2007;

d. Mrs Staponkienė (Lithuania, EDG): 30th Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Co-operation (PABSEC), Tbilisi (Georgia), 20-21 November 2007;

e. Ms Banović (Serbia, EPP/CD): Opening Ceremony of the Third Plenary Assembly of the European Roma and Travellers Forum, Strasbourg, 26 November 2007;

35. On 22 November, in reply to formal invitations, the Bureau nominated the following Representatives:

a. Mr Azzolini (Italy, EPP/CD): Second session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, Malta, 22-24 November 2007;

b. Mr Ateş (Turkey, EPP/CD): 4th parliamentary meeting on the future of Europe, Brussels (Belgium), 3-4 December 2007;

c. Mrs Lavtižar-Bebler (Slovenia, ALDE): Second seminar for Members of Parliamentary Committees on the Status of Women and other Committees dealing with Gender Equality, Geneva (Switzerland), 6-8 December 2007;

d. Committee on the Environment, Agriculture, and Local and Regional Authorities to appoint a Representative: 7th Conference of Ministers of Agriculture, Zaragoza (Spain), 3-6 February 2008;

e. Mr Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD): 2007 winter meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Vienna (Austria), 21-22 February 2008.

36. On 17 December, in reply to formal invitations, appointed the following Assembly members:

a. Mr Mota Amaral (Portugal, EPP/CD), Fifth Session of the Conference of the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States (PUIC), Cairo (Egypt), 30-31 January 2008;

b. Mr Bodewig (Germany, SOC), Mr Herrmann (Germany, EPP/CD), Mr Branger (France, EPP/CD) and Mr MacShane (United Kingdom, SOC), spring session of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Berlin (Germany), 23-27 May 2008.

2.20.2. Reports by Assembly Representatives on their participation at official activities:

37. On 5 October, the Bureau took note of the reports from the following Representatives and decided to refer them to the competent committees:

– Mr Rigoni (Italy, ALDE) and Mr Holovaty (Ukraine, ALDE), who participated in the 16th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Kyiv (Ukraine), 5-9 July 2007;

– Mr Dorić (Croatia, ALDE) who participated in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly 2007 autumn meeting, Portorož (Slovenia), 29 September to 2 October 2007.

38. On 22 November, the Bureau took note of the reports from the following Representatives and decided to refer them to the competent committees:

– Ms Lilliehöök (Sweden, EPP/CD), who participated in the Parliamentary Conference on “Security through co-operation in south-eastern Europe: the role of Parliamentarians”, Portorož (Slovenia), 29-30 September 2007;

– Mr Bjørnstad (Norway, SOC), who participated in the session of the Nordic Council, Oslo (Norway), 30 October to 1 November 2007.

39. On 17 December, the Bureau took note of a report by Mr Azzolini (Italy, EPP/CD), who participated in the Second Plenary Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, St Julian’s (Malta), 22-24 November 2007 and decided to refer this report to the competent committees.

2.21. Meetings elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris

40. On 5 October, the Bureau authorised the following meetings:

– Committee on Culture, Science and Education: Rome (Italy), 14 November 2007;

– Sub-Committee on International Economic Relations (of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development): Brussels (Belgium), 19-20 November 2007;

– Sub-Committee on Trafficking in Human Beings (of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men): Brussels (Belgium), 20 November 2007;

– Committee on Economic Affairs and Development: Brussels (Belgium), 21 November 2007;

– Sub-Committee on Crime Problems and the Fight against Terrorism; and Sub-Committee on Rights of Minorities and Sub-Committee on Rights of Minorities (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights): Bratislava (Slovakia), 22 November 2007;

– Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee: Florence (Italy), 7 December 2007.

41. On 17 December, the Bureau authorised the following meeting: Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, Vienna (Austria), end of April 2008 (dates to be indicated).

2.22. Visits by rapporteurs

42. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– authorised Mrs Durrieu, chairperson of the ad hoc committee, to visit Israel and the Palestinian territories with a view to preparing a tripartite forum, to extend this visit also to include Jordan;

– authorised Mrs Durrieu, rapporteur on "Strengthening co-operation with the Maghreb countries", to carry out a fact-finding visit to the Arab League in Cairo on 26 November 2007 for a meeting with its Secretary General, Mr Amr Moussa, for the purposes of her report.

43. On 17 December, the Bureau postponed its decision on the authorisation of Mr Iwiński (Poland, SOC), Rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee on "request by the Parliament of Kazakhstan for observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly", to visit Kazakhstan in autumn 2007 for the purposes of his report until the receipt of the annual report to be presented to the Bureau by the Kazakhstan Parliament in March 2008 regarding the progress achieved in the promotion of principles of parliamentary democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights as well as fundamental freedoms.

3. Relations with other bodies of the Council of Europe

3.1. Committee of Ministers

3.1.1. Meeting of the Joint Committee (Thursday, 24 January 2008 at 6.30 p.m.)

44. On 17 December, the Bureau agreed to include the following items in the draft agenda:

a. State of ratification by Council of Europe member states of leading Council of Europe conventions;

b. The European Court of Human Rights: current and future developments;

c. Role of the Parliamentary Assembly at Council of Europe ministerial conferences;

d. Proposal for a CM-Assembly working group to assist the Joint Committee in its work.

3.1.2. Role of the Parliamentary Assembly at Council of Europe ministerial conferences

45. On 17 December, the Bureau took note of a letter by Mr Schmied, Chairperson of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, on the role of the Parliamentary Assembly at Council of Europe ministerial conferences and agreed to raise this subject at the next Joint Committee meeting to be held on 24 January 2008 (see above).

3.2. Election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights

46. On 5 October, the Bureau took note of the timetable foreseen for the term of office of judges to be elected at the January 2008 part-session.

47. On 22 November, the Bureau, following the withdrawal of the last candidate submitted by the authorities of Ukraine – and in accordance with Article 22, paragraph 1, of the European Convention on Human Rights and paragraph 2 of the appendix to Resolution 1432 (2005) – decided to ask the Ukrainian authorities to complete the list of candidates.

48. On 17 December, the Bureau:

– election in respect of Luxembourg: agreed to propose to the Assembly to invite the Luxembourg authorities to submit a new list of candidates;

– election in respect of Ukraine: agreed to reiterate its invitation to the Ukrainian authorities to complete the list of candidates already submitted, which was now incomplete following the withdrawal of one candidate.

3.3. European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT)

49. On 5 October, the Bureau:

a. drew up lists of candidates on the basis of the order of preference recommended by the Sub-Committee on Human Rights and endorsed by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, with regard to the following countries:

– with regard to Andorra: Mr Joan-Miquel Rascagneres Llagostera, Mr Joan Cabeza Gimenez, Ms Maria Neus Vives Armengol

– with regard to Finland: Mrs Veronika Pimenoff, Mrs Sonja Kurten-Vartio, Mr Jari Pirjola

– with regard to Romania: Mr Dan Dermengiu, Mrs Camelia Doru, Mrs Alessandra Giusepina Greceanu

– with regard to the Russian Federation: Mrs Elena V. Sereda, Mr Mikhail P. Fomichenko, Mr Alexander B. Shatilov

b. with regard to Armenia and Poland, asked the two delegations to present new lists;

c. instructed the Secretary General of the Assembly to return lists deemed not to be in fulfilment of the criteria set out in Recommendation 1323 (1997).

50. On 22 November, the Bureau:

a. drew up lists of candidates on the basis of the order of preference recommended by the Sub-Committee on Human Rights and endorsed by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, with regard to the following countries:

– with regard to Malta: Mr Mario Felice, Mr Ian Spiteri Bailey, Ms Mary Anne Agius

– with regard to San Marino: Mrs Maria Rita Morganti, Mr Lino Zonzini, Mr Emanuele d'Amelio

– with regard to Latvia: Mrs Ilvija Pūce, Mrs Jolanta Vamze, Mr Vitolds Zahars

– with regard to the Czech Republic: Mrs Anna Šabatová, Mr František Valeš, Mr Jiri Kopal

b. with regard to Cyprus, decided to ask the Cypriot delegation to present a new list.

51. On 17 December, the Bureau:

a. drew up lists of candidates on the basis of the order of preference recommended by the Sub-Committee on Human Rights and as endorsed by the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, with regard to the following countries:

– with regard to Armenia: Mr Arman Vardanyan, Mrs Haykanush Parsamyan, Mr Ara Ustyan

– with regard to Greece: Mrs Haritini Dipla, Mrs Christina Papadopoulou, Mr Athanasios Theodoridis

– with regard to Iceland: Mr Pétur Hauksson, Mrs Gudrun Dogg Gudmundsdóttir, Mrs Gudbjorg Sveinsdóttir

– with regard to "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia": Mr Vladimir Ortakov, Mr Gordan Kalajdziev, Mrs Zoja Katju

b. with regard to Albania, decided to postpone consideration of the candidatures pending their formal transmission by the Albanian delegation of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;

c. with regard to Poland, decided to invite the Polish delegation to present a new list of candidates.

3.4. The European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission)

52. On 5 October, on the proposal of the president, the Bureau appointed Mr Ateş to succeed Mr Mota Amaral as representative of the Assembly until the end of 2007.

4. Elections

4.1. Parliamentary elections in Ukraine (30 September 2007)

53. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– took note of a memorandum on the pre-electoral mission undertaken from 4 to 6 September 2007;

– heard a report by Mrs Severinsen (Denmark, ALDE), chairperson of the ad hoc committee which had observed these elections;

– decided to return to this matter at its next meeting.

54. On 22 November, the Bureau approved the report of the ad hoc committee which had observed these elections (rapporteur: Mrs Severinsen (Denmark, ALDE)).

55. On 23 November, the Standing Committee held an exchange of views on the observation of the pre-term parliamentary elections in Ukraine (30 September 2007), on the basis of the report of the Bureau ad hoc committee.

4.2. Parliamentary elections in the Russian Federation (2 December 2007)

56. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– approved the composition of the ad hoc committee that would, subject to the receipt of an invitation, observe the elections; appointed Mr Van den Brande (Belgium, EPP/CD) as its chairperson;

– approved the composition of the pre-electoral mission, which would take place on 8 and 9 November 2007.

57. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– took note of a report on a pre-electoral mission carried out on 8 and 9 November 2007;

– took note of an invitation letter from Mr Boris Gryzlov, Chairman of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, to observe these elections;

– confirmed its decision to observe these elections and invited the chairpersons of the political groups to encourage members to participate in the observation, with a view to the dispatch of a delegation consisting of 55 members.

58. On 17 December, the Bureau approved the report of the ad hoc committee which had observed these elections (rapporteur: Mr Van den Brande, Belgium, EPP/CD) and decided to declassify it.

4.3. Presidential election in Georgia (5 January 2008)

59. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– took note of an invitation letter from Mrs Nino Burjanadze, Chairperson of the Parliament of Georgia, to observe these elections;

– decided to observe these elections;

– agreed to set up an ad hoc committee to observe the elections composed of 30 members, in accordance with the “D’Hondt system” and appointed Mr Eörsi (Hungary, ALDE) as its chairperson;

– authorised a pre-electoral mission consisting of five members – one from each political group who were also members of the ad hoc committee – to be carried out from 5 to 7 December 2007; and authorised the president to decide on the composition of the pre-election mission, since it would be carried out prior to the next meeting of the Bureau on 17 December 2007.

60. On 17 December, the Bureau:

– took note of a report on a pre-electoral mission carried out from 5 to 7 December 2007;

– approved the composition of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections.

4.4. Presidential election in Serbia (20 January 2008)

61. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– decided to observe these elections subject to the receipt of an invitation;

– agreed to set up an ad hoc committee to observe these elections composed of 30 members in accordance with the “D’Hondt system”;

– authorised a pre-electoral mission consisting of five members – one from each political group who were also members of the ad hoc committee – on the understanding that it should take place approximately one month ahead of the elections.

62. On 17 December, the Bureau:

– agreed to observe these elections subject to the receipt of an invitation;

– agreed to establish for this purpose an ad hoc committee consisting of 10 members – two from each political group – and invited the political groups to make a proposal for the chairmanship of the ad hoc committee, as the election would be held prior to the next meeting of the Bureau (21 January 2008).

4.5. Parliamentary elections in Monaco (3 February 2008)

63. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– took note of an invitation letter from Mr Jean-Paul Proust, Minister of State of Monaco, to observe these elections;

– decided to observe these elections;

– agreed to set up an ad hoc committee to observe the elections composed of five members, one from each political group.

64. On 17 December, the Bureau agreed that the ad hoc committee to observe these elections would be composed as follows: Mr Slutsky (Russian Federation; SOC); Mr Vareikis (Lithuania; EPP/CD); Mr Marty (Switzerland; ALDE); Mr Hunault (France; EDG) and Mr Laakso (Finland; UEL); and appointed the latter as chairperson.

4.6. Presidential election in Armenia (19 February 2008)

65. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– decided to observe these elections subject to the receipt of an invitation;

– agreed to set up an ad hoc committee to observe these elections composed of 30 members, in accordance with the “D’Hondt system”;

– authorised a pre-electoral mission consisting of five members – one from each political group who were also members of the ad hoc committee – on the understanding that it should take place approximately one month ahead of the elections.

66. On 17 December, the Bureau approved the composition of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections and appointed Mr Prescott (United Kingdom; SOC) as its chairperson.

4.7. Presidential election in the Russian Federation (2 March 2008)

67. On 17 December, the Bureau:

– decided to observe these elections, subject to the receipt of an invitation;

– agreed to set up an ad hoc committee to observe the elections composed of 30 members, in accordance with the “D’Hondt system”;

– authorised a pre-electoral mission consisting of five members – one from each political group who were also members of the ad hoc committee – on the understanding that it should take place approximately one month ahead of the elections.

5. Other matters

5.1. Communications

68. On 22 November, the Bureau:

– took note of communications by the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe;

– held an exchange of views on the medium-term strategy of the Council of Europe and decided to return to this question in the light of future developments;

– took note of a communication by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly.

69. On 17 December, the Bureau took note of communications by the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Appendix 1

Monopolisation of the electronic media and possible abuse of power in Italy

1. On 5 October, the Bureau:

– took note of a draft opinion by the Monitoring Committee and declassified it;

– agreed to return to this matter at its next meeting.

2. On 22 November, the Bureau agreed to propose to the Assembly that a monitoring procedure concerning the monopolisation of the electronic media and the possible abuse of power in Italy should not be opened at this stage, but that legislative developments in that country should instead be followed in the Monitoring Committee's periodic reports, assisted, where necessary, by the Committee on Culture, Science and Education and the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

3. According to paragraph 3 of the terms of reference of the Monitoring Committee contained in Resolution 1115 (1997) as modified by Resolution 1431 (2005), in case both the Monitoring Committee and the Bureau consider that there is no need to open a monitoring procedure, the Assembly shall confirm this decision by a vote during the discussion of the progress report of the Bureau. However, during that discussion the Assembly may decide by a majority vote following a request by at least 10 members that a debate be held during the next partsession on the written opinion of the Monitoring Committee which then shall be transformed into a report containing a draft resolution.

Appendix 2

References and transmissions to committees

On 17 December, the Bureau approved the following references and modifications of references, subject to ratification by the Assembly:

references to committees

a. Doc. 11405

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Papadopoulos and others, The underground economy in the wider Europe, consultation of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development *on the possible follow-up, taking into account the discussion of the Bureau*

b. Doc. 11409

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr de Puig and others, The eradication of discrimination based on the principle of "collective guilt" in Europe, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Strengthening democracy, good governance and the rule of law in member states (fighting against discrimination)]

c. Doc. 11410

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Kaikkonen and others, Changing the name of the Council of Europe, consultation of the Political Affairs Committee and the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities *on the possible follow-up*

d. Doc. 11411

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Chope and others, Threat to human rights from the situation in Zimbabwe, to the Political Affairs Committee, *for information*

e. Doc. 11414

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr de Puig and others, Electronic democracy, to the Political Affairs Committee, for report, and to the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities, for opinion, taking into account the current work of the Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission and the preparation of the next Forum for the Future of Democracy in Spain in 2008

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Strengthening democracy, good governance and the rule of law in member states]

f. Doc. 11415

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Durrieu and others, Stepping up co-operation with Libya and Mauritania, to the Political Affairs Committee to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on "Strengthening co-operation with the Maghreb countries"

g. Doc. 11418

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Melčák and others, Economic impact of the current waste-related legislation, to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development and to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for information*

h. Doc. 11421

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Rochebloine and others, Violation of obligations undertaken by Azerbaijan in respect of the protection of the rights of national minorities, to the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), *for information*

i. Doc. 11422

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Keskin and others, Making multiple nationality an important component of modern integration policy throughout Europe, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for information*

j. Doc. 11423

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Jurgens and others, Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*, and to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for opinion*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Building a more humane and inclusive Europe; strengthening the fight against racism, xenophobia and intolerance]

k. Doc. 11424

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Beck and others Right to a fair trial for Yukos executives, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for information*

l. Doc. 11425

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Prescott and others, For a greater commitment of member states concerning the efficiency and implementation of the Council of Europe Treaty Law, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Promoting common fundamental values: human rights, rule of law and democracy; Ensuring compliance with the obligations and commitments entered into by member states]

m. Doc. 11427

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Jonker and others, Housing, land and property considerations as part of durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons, consultation of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population *on the possible follow-up, to take into account other motions tabled on related subjects*

n. Doc. 11428

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Mendes Bota and others, Involving men to achieve gender equality, to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for report at the Standing Committee*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Reinforcing and expanding the protection of human rights; Responding to common threats to Europeans (violence against women)]

o. Doc. 11430

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Lotman and others, The situation of human rights in China and Tibet, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Promoting common fundamental values: human rights, rule of law and democracy]

p. Doc. 11443

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Evans and others Growing food or fuel?, to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for report at the Standing Committee*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Promoting sustainable development (climate, water, energy, pollution)]

q. Doc. 11444

Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Huss and others Noise pollution and the environment, to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for information*

r. Doc. 11338

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Platvoet and others, A study of history teaching in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, *for a report on history teaching of recent conflicts*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Developing intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, protecting cultural diversity and strengthening the fight against racism, xenophobia and intolerance]

request to extend a reference

a. Doc. 10773

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Bernard Marquet and others, Child and teenage suicide in Europe: a serious public health issue

Reference No. 3164 of 23 January 2006 – Validity: 23 January 2008, extension until 23 April 2008

request to modify a reference

a. Doc. 11401

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Vermot-Mangold and others, The role of parliamentarians in promoting the rapid entry into force of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings and its ratification by as many states as possible, to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for report*, and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for opinion*

[Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe priority: Responding to common threats to Europeans (trafficking in human beings)]