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25 April 2009

Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the Standing Committee (30 January-27 April 2009)

Progress report¹

Bureau of the Assembly

Rapporteur: Mr Joachim HÖRSTER, Germany, Group of the European People's Party

1. Introduction

1. The Bureau met on 30 January in Strasbourg and on 12 March in Paris. The Standing Committee met on 13 March in Paris.

2. Functioning of the Assembly

2.1. Progress Report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the Standing Committee (30 January-27 April 2009)

2. On 30 January, the Bureau appointed Mr Hörster (Germany, EPP/CD) as rapporteur.

2.2. Follow-up to the 2009 First ordinary part-Session of the Assembly (Strasbourg, 26-30 January 2009)

i. Follow-up of adopted texts

3. On 30 January, the Bureau:

a. [Resolution 1647 \(2009\)](#) "Implementation of [Resolution 1633 \(2008\)](#) on the consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia":

- in accordance with paragraph 15, decided to constitute an ad hoc committee of the Bureau comprising the President of the Assembly; the Chairpersons of the Political Groups; the co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee for Georgia and for Russia; the Chairpersons (or their representatives) of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, of the Political Affairs Committee and of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights; and representatives of the Georgian and Russian parliamentary delegations and which would be chaired by the President of the Assembly;
- in accordance with paragraph 19, decided to include on the draft agenda for the April 2009 part-session, an item on the follow-up given by Georgia and Russia to [Resolution 1647 \(2009\)](#);

b. [Resolution 1648 \(2009\)](#) on "the humanitarian consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia": decided to submit the matter to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population and to invite the committee to produce a report for the April 2009 part-session;

1. [Instantiation]



c. [Resolution 1643 \(2009\)](#) "The implementation by Armenia of Assembly [Resolutions 1609 \(2008\)](#) and 1620 (2008)": in accordance with paragraph 11, asked the Monitoring Committee to follow this matter;

d. [Resolution 1651 \(2009\)](#) "The consequences of the global financial crisis": in accordance with paragraph 8, asked the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee to analyse the social impact and human dimension of the financial and economic crisis in the member states of the Council of Europe.

ii. Follow-up of the current affairs debate on "the situation in Gaza":

4. On 30 January the Bureau decided to refer this matter to the Political Affairs Committee so that it could be taken into account in the report on the "Situation in the Middle East".

2.3. Standing Committee (Paris, 13 March 2009)

i. Draft agenda

5. On 30 January the Bureau took note of the draft agenda.

6. On 12 March the Bureau took note of the updated draft agenda.

ii. Meeting of the Standing Committee

7. On 13 March, the Standing Committee:

- a. ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Belgium, Latvia, the Netherlands, Serbia and Spain;
- b. ratified the changes in the composition of Assembly committees in respect of the delegations of Belgium, Latvia, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain and Switzerland;
- c. held an exchange of views on the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the Council of Europe, with the participation of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
- d. held an exchange of views on the Parliamentary Assembly's co-operation with its institutional partners in election observation;
- e. at the request of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, decided to withdraw the report "Women in Prison" ([Doc. 11619](#) rev) from the agenda, for debate at the Assembly's April 2009 Part-Session.

2.4. Adopted texts

8. On 13 March, the Standing Committee unanimously adopted, on behalf of the Assembly, the following texts:

- [Recommendation 1863 \(2009\)](#), Environment and health: better prevention of environment-related health hazards
- [Recommendation 1864 \(2009\)](#), Promoting the participation by children in decisions affecting them
- [Resolution 1656 \(2009\)](#), Mobilising parliaments for Africa's development
- [Resolution 1657 \(2009\)](#), Riots in European cities: lessons and Council of Europe response
- [Resolution 1658 \(2009\)](#), Questions to the Committee of Ministers

2.5. 2009 Second ordinary part-Session of the Assembly (27-30 April 2009)

9. On 30 January, the Bureau approved the preliminary draft agenda.

10. On 12 March, the Bureau updated the draft agenda for the part-session.

2.6. Proposals for June and September 2009 part-sessions by the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

11. On 12 March, the Bureau agreed to take account of the following proposals when drawing up the draft agendas:

- a. June 2009 part-session: holding of a joint debate on the “Environment and renewable energies” and “Nuclear energy and sustainable development”;
- b. September-October part-session 2009: to devote half a day to the holding of an extended debate on “The challenges posed by climate change”.

2.7. Dates of Assembly Part-Sessions (2011 – 2013)

12. On 12 March, the Bureau approved the following dates:

- a. 2011: 24-28 January; 11-15 April; 20-24 June; 3-7 October;
- b. 2012: 23-27 January; 23-27 April; 25-29 June; 1-5 October;
- c. 2013: 21-25 January; 22-26 April; 24-28 June; 30 September – 4 October.

2.8. Follow-up to [Resolution 1583 \(2007\)](#) “Improving the participation of members in Assembly plenary sessions and committee meetings”

13. On 12 March the Bureau:

- a. considered a letter on this subject from the President of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs;
- b. invited the President to forward statistics on participation to the Chairpersons of National Parliamentary Delegations and, in particular, to draw the attention of those having low rates of participation to this situation.

2.9. Parliamentary Assembly Human Rights Prize

14. On 12 March, in accordance with the regulations for the Prize, the Bureau approved the recommendation submitted by the Selection Panel proposing “British Irish Rights Watch” as the winner; subject to ratification by the Assembly in the framework of the activity report of the Bureau and the Standing Committee.

2.10. References and transmissions to committees

15. On 30 January, the Bureau approved the following references and modifications of references which were ratified the same day by the Assembly:

i. references to committees

a. [Doc. 11804](#)

Protecting the human rights of long-term displaced persons in Europe

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Jonker and others, to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population *for report*

ii. requests to extend references

a. [Doc. 11154](#)

The environment and renewable energies

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Scheer and others

Ref. No. 3312 of 16 March 2007 – validity: 16 March 2009, extension until 30 September 2009

b. [Doc. 11198](#)

Nuclear energy and sustainable development

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Lengagne and others

Ref. no. 3333 of 16 April 2007 – validity: 16 April 2009, extension until 30 October 2009

16. On 13 March, the Standing Committee approved the following references and modifications to references:

i. modification of a reference

a. Bureau decision

The state of human rights in Europe: the need to eradicate impunity, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report* and to Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for opinion*

ii. extension of references

a. Doc. 11206

The situation of Roma in Europe and relevant activities of the Council of Europe

Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Čilevičs and others

Reference no. 3340 of 20 April 2007 – validity: 20 April 2009, extension until 31 January 2010

b. Bureau decision

An internationally recognized status of election observers

Reference no. 3322 of 16 March 2007 – validity: 16 March 2009, extension until 31 December 2009

c. Bureau decision

Request by the Parliament of Kazakhstan for observer status with the Parliamentary Assembly

Reference no. 3318 of 16 March 2007 – validity: 16 March 2009, extension until 31 January 2010

d. Doc. 11105

European code of conduct on lobbying including guidelines for politicians, lobbyists and corporations

Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Gacek and others

Reference no. 3335 of 16 April 2007 – validity: 16 April 2009, extension until 31 October 2009;

2.11. Ad hoc Committees of the Bureau

i. 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

17. On 30 January, the Bureau renewed this ad hoc committee and approved its composition.

ii. Ad hoc Committee on the Forum for the Future of Democracy

18. On 30 January, the Bureau renewed this ad hoc committee and appointed Mr Popescu (Ukraine, SOC) as Chairperson, in his capacity as Chairperson of the parliamentary delegation of the host country of the Forum to take place in Kiev in October 2009.

iii. Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau on promoting dialogue between the Georgian and Russian Assembly Delegations

19. On 12 March, the Ad hoc Committee:

- a. devoted its constitutive meeting to the definition of its objectives and work programme;
- b. agreed to hold its next meeting in Valencia (Spain) in the margins of the meeting of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe to be held in Valencia on 30 and 31 March 2009.

2.12. Composition of the Monitoring Committee and the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

i. Monitoring Committee

20. On 30 January, the Bureau approved the new members as proposed by the political groups, for ratification by the Assembly.

ii. Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs

21. On 30 January, the Bureau approved the new members as proposed by the political groups, for ratification by the Assembly.

2.13. Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2009

22. On 30 January, the Bureau made the following appointments:

- a. European Commission for Democracy through Law – Venice Commission: Mr van der Linden (PPE/CD) appointed by the President, Mr Pourgourides (EPP/CD Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights); and as substitute Ms Leutheusser-Schnarrenberger (ALDE, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights);
- b. Council for Democratic Elections (of the Venice Commission): Mr Gross (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), Mr Van den Brande (EPP/CD, Monitoring Committee) and Mrs Durrieu (SOC, Political Affairs Committee), and as substitutes: Mr Cilevics (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), Mr Wilshire (EDG, Monitoring Committee) and Mr Hancock (ALDE, Political Affairs);
- c. European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity – North-South Centre: Mr Wodarg (SOC, Committee on Culture, Science and Education) and Mr Sasi (EPP/CD, Committee on Economic Affairs and Development) and as substitutes: Mrs de Melo (SOC, Committee on Culture, Science and Education), Mrs Papadopoulos (ALDE, Committee on Economic Affairs and Development);
- d. European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance – ECRI: Mr Cilevics (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) and Mr Vitali (EPP/CD, Committee on Political Affairs) and as substitutes: Mr Berenyi (EPP/CD, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) and Mr Szabo (SOC, Political Affairs Committee); a representative of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education will be designated at a later stage;
- e. Advisory Board for the Future of Democracy: Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee or a member of the Ad hoc Sub-Committee on the Forum for the Future of Democracy (according to availability);
- f. High-level group entrusted with examining the follow-up to the Juncker report: Mr Van der Linden (EPP/DC) appointed by the President;
- g. Group of States against Corruption – GRECO: Mr Marty (ALDE, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) and as substitute Mr Sasi (EPP/CD, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights);
- h. European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice – CEPEJ: Mr Hunault (EDG, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights);
- i. Council of Europe Committee for Works of Art: Mr Nachbar (EPP/CD, Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the Cultural Heritage of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education) and Mr O'Hara (SOC, General rapporteur on the Cultural Heritage and rapporteur on the European Museum Awards);
- j. Pan-European Federation for Heritage – Europa Nostra: Mr Nachbar (EPP/CD, Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on the Cultural Heritage of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education).

2.14. Appointments of Assembly Representatives for official activities

23. On 30 January, in reply to formal invitations, the Bureau took the following decisions:

- a. Mrs Err (Luxembourg, SOC): Side event to the Commission on the Status of Women session of the United Nations, New York (United States of America), 3-4 March 2009;

- b. Mr Çavuşoğlu (Turkey, EDG), 70th Rose-Roth Seminar, Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), 19-21 March 2009;
 - c. Mrs John-Calame (Switzerland, SOC), Seminar on "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women" and "the role of female parliamentarians in conflict resolution", Kinshasa, Congo, 30-31 March 2009, *no cost for the Assembly*;
 - d. Mr Olsson (Sweden, EPP/CD), 60th international session of the European Youth Parliament, Stockholm (Sweden), 17-26 April 2009, *no cost for the Assembly*;
 - e. Mr MacShane (United Kingdom, SOC), Nato Parliamentary Assembly Spring Session, Oslo (Norway), 22-26 May 2009, *no cost for the Assembly*;
24. On 12 March, in reply to formal invitations, the Bureau took the following decisions:
- a. Mr Austin (United Kingdom, SOC): 120^{ème} Assembly of the Interparliamentary Union, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 5-10 April 2009;
 - b. Mr Sasi (Finland, EPP/CD): Global parliamentary conference on the economic and financial crisis, Geneva (Switzerland), 7-8 May 2009.

2.15. Visits by rapporteurs

25. On 30 January, the Bureau authorised:
- a. Mr Fassino (Italy, SOC), new rapporteur of the Political Affairs Committee for the Middle East to visit Israel and the occupied territories (early March) and then Egypt in the context of the preparation of his report;
 - b. Mr Blum (France, EPP/CD), rapporteur for the Social, Health and Family Affairs committee on "Co-operation between the Council of Europe and Maghreb countries in fighting social exclusion", to visit Algeria in the context of the preparation of his report.

2.16. Meetings elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris

26. On 30 January, the Bureau authorised the following meetings:
- a. Sub-Committee on the European Social Charter and Employment (of the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee): Moscow (Russia), 26-27 February 2009;
 - b. Sub-Committee on Youth and Sport (of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education): Mollina (Spain), 24-25 March 2009;
 - c. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population: The Hague (Netherlands), 26-27 March 2009;
 - d. Sub-Committee on Tourism Development (of the Economic Affairs and Development Committee): Limassol (Cyprus), 27-28 March 2009;
 - e. Sub-Committee on equal participation of women and men in decision-making (of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men): Lisbon (Portugal), 2-3 April 2009;
 - f. Sub-Committee on Sustainable Development (of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs): St. Petersburg (Russia), 14-15 May 2009;
 - g. Committee on Economic Affairs and Development: Helsinki (Finland), 18-19 May 2009;
 - h. Political Affairs Committee: Astana (Kazakhstan), 25-26 May 2009;
 - i. Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights: Bucharest (Romania), end of May 2009;
27. On 12 March, the Bureau authorised the following meetings:
- a. Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee): Valencia (Spain), 30-31 March 2009;
 - b. Ad hoc Sub-committee (of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men): Athens (Greece), 5-6 May 2009;
 - c. Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men: Istanbul (Turkey), 14-15 May 2009;
 - d. Sub-committee on external relations (of the Political Affairs Committee): Saint Petersburg (Russian Federation), 14-15 May 2009;

- e. Committee on Culture, Science and Education: Copenhagen (Denmark), 8-9 September 2009.

3. Relations with other bodies of the Council of Europe

3.1. Committee of Ministers

i. Joint Committee (Wednesday, 29 April 2009 at 6.30 pm)

28. On 12 March 2009, the Bureau agreed to propose to the Committee of Ministers to include the following items on the agenda:

- a. Consultation between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers on the candidatures for the post of Secretary General of the Council of Europe;
- b. Council of Europe 2010 budget.

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

29. On 30 January, the Bureau approved the following lists of candidates for the CPT with regard to Georgia and Sweden 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:

i. With regard to Sweden

- Mr Stefan WEINBERG-KRAKOWSKI
- Ms Gunilla EDELSTAM
- Ms Anna WALDENSTRÖM

ii. With regard to Georgia

- Mr George TUGUSHI
- Ms Tea TUTBERIDZE
- Mr Otar KVACHADZE

4. Relations with other international organisations

4.1. Co-operation with ODIHR

30. On 12 March, the Bureau held an exchange of views with Ambassador Janez Lenarcic, Director of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) of the OSCE.

5. Relations with non-member states

5.1. Belarus

31. On 12 March, the Bureau:

- a. took note of the press release issued at the end of the visit to Belarus by the ad hoc sub-committee of the Political Affairs Committee which took place from 16 to 19 February;
- b. noted that two members of the parliament of Belarus and two members of the opposition had been invited to the next meeting of the Political Affairs Committee (Paris, 17 March 2009);
- c. in the absence of the Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee, decided to postpone discussion on the situation in Belarus to one of its future meetings.

5.2. Co-operation agreement with the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan

32. On 12 March, the Bureau held an exchange of views with a parliamentary delegation from the Republic of Kazakhstan, led by Mr Alexander Sudin, Vice-President of the Senate of Kazakhstan, on progress made in the promotion of principles established in the co-operation agreement;

6. Elections

6.1. Constitutional referendum in Azerbaijan (18 March 2009)

33. On 30 January, the Bureau decided to organise a delegation (2 EPP/CD, 2 SOC, 1 ALDE, 1 EDG, and 1 UEL) to be present during this referendum and authorised the President of the Assembly to appoint the Chairperson.

34. On 12 March, the Bureau took note of the composition of the delegation to be present during the referendum as submitted to the President by the political groups and of the appointment by the President of Mr Wille (Belgium, ALDE) as Chairperson of the delegation.

6.2. Presidential election in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (22 March and 5 April 2009)

35. On 30 January, the Bureau took note of the invitation letter sent by the country’s authorities; approved the composition of the ad hoc committee and authorised the President of the Assembly to appoint the Chairperson.

36. On 12 March, the Bureau took note:

- a. of the press release issued at the end of the pre-electoral mission which took place from 25 to 28 February 2009;
- b. of the fact that Mrs Pourbaix-Lundin (Sweden, EPP/CD) had been appointed by the President as Chairperson of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections.

6.3. Parliamentary elections in Montenegro (29 March 2009)

37. On 30 January, the Bureau:

- a. subject to receipt of an invitation, decided to observe these elections;
- b. set up an ad hoc committee to observe these elections, composed of 20 members in accordance with the “D'Hondt” system (7 EPP/CD, 6 SOC, 3 EDG, 3 ALDE and 1 UEL) and authorised the President of the Assembly to appoint the Chairperson;
- c. authorised a pre-electoral mission composed 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.

38. On 12 March, the Bureau took note:

- a. of the invitation letter regarding the observation of these elections from the Montenegrin authorities;
- b. of the press release issued at the end of the pre-electoral mission which took place from 24 to 27 February 2009;
- c. of the composition of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections as submitted to the President by the political groups and of the appointment by the President of Mr Gross (Switzerland, SOC) as Chairperson.

6.4. Parliamentary elections in Moldova (5 April 2009)

39. On 30 January, the Bureau authorised the President of the Assembly to approve the composition of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections and to appoint its Chairperson.

40. On 12 March, the Bureau took note:

- a. of the press release issued at the end of the pre-electoral mission which took place on 5 and 6 March 2009;

- b. of the composition of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections as submitted to the President by the political groups and of the appointment by the President of Mr Wilshire (United Kingdom, EDG) as Chairperson.

6.5. Meeting of Chairpersons and members of ad hoc committees for the observation of elections during the period 2006-2008

- 41. On 30 January, the Bureau agreed to organise an exchange of views with the new Director of ODIHR, Ambassador Lenarcic, during the next meeting of the Standing Committee in Paris on 13 March;
- 42. On 12 March, the Bureau took note of the conclusions of the meeting and authorised their distribution to the participants at the Standing Committee the following day.

7. Budgetary matters

7.1. Budgetary prospects for the Council of Europe for 2010

- 43. On 12 March, the Bureau held an exchange of views with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and Mr Wille (Belgium, ALDE), in his capacity as rapporteur on this subject for the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development.

8. Other business

8.1. Conferences

i. Conference on early warning systems and conflict prevention

- 44. On 30 January, the Bureau approved the proposals concerning the organisation of this conference as prepared by the ad hoc sub-committee on early warning systems and conflict prevention and endorsed by the Political Affairs Committee.

ii. European Conference of Presidents of Parliaments (Cyprus, 10-12 June 2010)

- 45. On 12 March, the Bureau took note of the dates of the conference.

8.2. Communications

- 46. On 12 March, the Bureau took note of the communications of the President, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe, as well as the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly.