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Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (24 April-21 June 2015)

Progress report

Bureau of the Assembly

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1. Introduction

At its meeting on 24 April 2015, the Bureau appointed me as rapporteur for this report, which covers its activities over the period from the last Bureau meeting of the second part-session of 2015 (Friday 24 April) to the first Bureau meeting of the third part-session of 2015 (Monday 22 June).

The following chapters include the decisions taken at the Bureau meetings of 24 April in Strasbourg and 21 May in Sarajevo. Chapter 2 presents a list of decisions, which have either already been ratified by the Standing Committee on 22 May or which do not require ratification.

An addendum to this report will be issued immediately after the Bureau meeting on 22 June, which will also include decisions to be ratified on the same day. A second addendum will be issued immediately after the Bureau meeting of 26 June. It will include only the decisions to be ratified by the Assembly on the same day, notably the references and transmissions which will have been approved by the Bureau.

The Bureau will hold its next meetings in Strasbourg on Monday 22 June at 8 am and Friday 26 June at 8.30 am (during the third part-session), then on Monday 31 August in Paris.

2. Activities of the Bureau since the last part-session and decisions not requiring ratification by the Assembly

2.1. Follow-up to *Resolution 2031 (2015)* on “*Terrorist attacks in Paris: together for a democratic response*”

On 24 April, the Bureau took note of the lines of action proposed by the Committees on Political Affairs and Democracy; Legal Affairs and Human Rights; Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development; Equality and Non-Discrimination; and Culture, Science, Education and Media.



2.2. Standing Committee (Sarajevo, 22 May 2015)

2.2.1. Draft agenda

On 24 April and 21 May, the Bureau took note of the draft agenda.

2.2.2. Request for a current affairs debate (under Rule 53 of the Rules of Procedure)

On 21 May, the Bureau decided to propose that the Standing Committee hold a current affairs debate on *The situation in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia”* and appointed Mr Robert Walter (United Kingdom, EC) as first speaker.

2.3. Third part-session of 2015 (Strasbourg, 22-26 June)

2.3.1. Draft agenda

On 24 April, the Bureau drew up the preliminary draft agenda, which it revised at its meeting of 21 May.

2.3.2. Joint Committee (Strasbourg, Thursday 25 June 2015, from 3.30 to 4 pm)

On 21 May, the Bureau took note of the draft agenda of the meeting of the Joint Committee and, subject to the transmission of candidatures by the Committee of Ministers, decided to invite the candidates for the post of Secretary General of the Assembly for an interview to be held by the Bureau at its meeting in Paris on 31 August 2015.

2.4. References and transmissions

On 24 April, in addition to the references that were ratified by the Assembly on the same day within the addendum to the Progress report, the Bureau considered and approved the following references which did not require ratification:

2.4.1. Reference for consultation

- [Doc. 13746](#), motion for a resolution, “When human rights provide protection to individuals who represent a threat to national security”, consultation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *on a possible follow-up to be given*.

2.4.2. Extension of reference

- Bureau decision, “Political transition in Tunisia” (Ref. 3889 of 29 June 2012 – validity: 29 June 2015): extension until 29 June 2016.

2.4.3. References to committees

On 21 May, the Bureau considered and approved the following references to committees, which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee on the following day:

- [Doc. 13761](#), motion for a resolution, “Mr Dan Adamescu and the right to a fair trial”: *no further action*;
- [Doc. 13762](#), motion for a recommendation, “Enhancing the efforts of the European Youth Foundation for the Balkans”, *no further action*;
- [Doc. 13766](#), motion for a resolution, “The impact of European populations dynamics on migration policies”, reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced persons *for report*.

2.5. Ad hoc committee of the Bureau on large scale arrival of refugees to Turkey

On 21 May, the Bureau took note of the programme of the visit to Turkey (14-16 June 2015); appointed Ms Anne Brasseur, President of the Assembly, as Chairperson of the ad hoc committee; modified its composition to include Ms Josette Durrieu (France, SOC), rapporteur of the Monitoring Committee on *Post-monitoring dialogue with Turkey* and Mr Jean-Marie Bockel (France, EPP/CD), former rapporteur of the

Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons on *Humanitarian consequences of the actions of the terrorist group known as "Islamic State"*; and decided that, for logistical reasons, members of the ad hoc committee could not be accompanied by the secretaries of national delegations.

On 14 June, the ad hoc committee was welcomed in Istanbul by Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, and Mr Reha Denemeç, Chairperson of the Turkish delegation to the Assembly. It held a hearing on "Challenges faced by Turkey in dealing with the influx of refugees from Syria", with the participation of Mr Fuat Oktay, President of the Prime Ministry Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD); Ms Pascale Moreau, Representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Turkey; and Mr Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, Professor of International Refugee Law at Oxford University and Senior Research Fellow at All Souls College, Oxford University.

On 15 June, the ad hoc committee carried out a visit to Syrian refugee camps in Gaziantep (Elbeyli Visiting Centre and Nizip I and Nizip II Visiting Centers) and to a social integration project in Kilis. It also heard statements by Mr Hasan Kara, Mayor of Kilis and Ms Fatma Şahin, Mayor of Gaziantep.

2.6. Election observation

2.6.1. Turkey: parliamentary elections (7 June 2015)

On 21 May, the Bureau took note of the press release of the pre-electoral delegation.

2.7. Václav Havel Human Rights Prize

On 24 April, the Bureau appointed its three representatives to the Selection Panel: Mr Dick Marty, for a first term, and Ms Nuala Mole and Mr Christos Pourgourides, for a second term.

2.8. Petition for the rights of new-borns surviving their abortion

On 24 April, the Bureau took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly and decided to transmit the petition to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, in order for it to establish whether there is a legitimate interest of the Assembly.

2.9. World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 18-20 November 2015)

On 21 May, the Bureau decided to constitute an ad hoc committee of the Bureau to participate in the Forum, composed of members to be proposed by the Assembly committees before the Bureau meeting of 26 June 2015.

2.10. Written declaration No. 593 (2015) on The attempt at undemocratic seizure of power in Macedonia

Following a request submitted by the Permanent Representative of Greece to change the title, the Bureau decided on 21 May, to add in the title, after the word "Macedonia", a footnote with the following text:

"According to Resolution (95) 23 of the Committee of Ministers, for all purposes within the Council of Europe, this State is provisionally referred to as "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" pending settlement of the difference which has arisen over the name of this State".

2.11. Election of the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

On 21 May, the Bureau interviewed the candidate in camera.

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

On 24 April, the Bureau approved the lists of candidates in respect of Albania, Andorra, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, Iceland, Montenegro, San Marino, Slovak Republic and "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", which were subsequently transmitted to the Committee of Ministers.

It also endorsed the recommendation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to invite the Russian Federation to submit a new list of candidates to the CPT.

2.13. Issues raised by committees

2.13.1. Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

On 24 April, the Bureau authorised Mr Jordi Xuclà (Spain, ALDE), Rapporteur on “Evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Palestinian National Council”, to carry out a fact-finding visit to the Palestinian Territories by the end of 2015, in the framework of the preparation of his report.

2.14. Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2015

On 24 April, the Bureau approved the appointment of Mr Nicos Nicolaides (Cyprus, SOC), Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Culture, Diversity and Heritage, as representative to Europa Nostra (Pan-European Federation for Heritage).

2.15. Budgetary matters – Analysis of the use made by the Assembly’s political groups of their allocations for 2014

On 21 May, the Bureau took note of the communication submitted by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs.

2.16. Other business

2.16.1. The case of Mr Andrej Hunko (Germany, UEL), entering Ukraine via the Russian Federation through an unauthorised border crossing

On 24 April, the Bureau decided to ask the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs to consider the matter.

2.17. Meetings elsewhere than Strasbourg and Paris

On 24 April, the Bureau authorised:

- the sub-committee on Media and Information Society (of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media) to meet in Kyiv on 12 June 2015;
- the sub-committee on Culture, Diversity and Heritage (of the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media) to meet in Limassol, Cyprus, on 27 October 2015.

On 21 May, the Bureau authorised the Monitoring Committee to meet in Sarajevo on 3-4 September 2015.

2.18. Meetings of the Bureau and the Standing Committee in Sofia

On 24 April, the Bureau took note that the meetings would be held on 26-27 November 2015.

3. Activities of the Standing Committee (Sarajevo, 22 May 2015)

On 22 May, the Standing Committee heard welcome addresses by Mr Šefik Džaferović, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Mr Bariša Čolak, Speaker of the House of Peoples, and held an exchange of views with Mr Igor Crnadak, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

The Standing Committee ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Germany and Montenegro and approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees.

It took note of the draft agenda of the third part-session of the Assembly (22-26 June 2015) and ratified the references proposed by the Bureau which are contained in paragraph 2.4.3.

The Standing Committee held a current affairs debate on “The situation in ‘the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia’”.

It adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

- [Resolution 2056 \(2015\)](#) on “The inclusion of children’s rights in national constitutions as an essential component of effective national child policies”;

- [Resolution 2057 \(2015\)](#) and [Recommendation 2071 \(2015\)](#) on “Cultural heritage in crisis and post-crisis situations”;
- [Resolution 2058 \(2015\)](#) and [Recommendation 2072 \(2015\)](#) on “The allocation of seats in the Parliamentary Assembly with respect to Turkey”;
- [Resolution 2059 \(2015\)](#) on “Criminalisation of irregular migrants: a crime without victim”.

The Standing Committee decided to hold its next meeting in Sofia on 27 November 2015 (to be confirmed).