



**Doc. 14345**  
20 June 2017

## **Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (28 April-25 June 2017)**

### **Progress report**

Rapporteur: Mr Tiny KOX, Netherlands, Group of the Unified European Left

### **1. Introduction**

At its meeting on 28 April, 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 2017 (Friday 28 April) to the first Bureau meeting of the third part-session of 2017 (Monday 26 June).

The following chapters include the decisions taken at the Bureau meetings of 28 April in Strasbourg and 29 May in Prague. Chapter 2 presents a list of decisions, which have either already been ratified by the Standing Committee on 30 May or which do not require ratification. Chapter 4 lists the decisions taken on 29 May that require ratification at the opening of the third part-session of the Assembly.

An addendum to this report will be issued after the Bureau meeting of 26 June, which will also include decisions to be ratified on the same day. Another addendum will be issued after the Bureau meeting of 30 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 26 June at 8 am and Friday 30 June at 8.30 am, then on Monday 4 September in Paris.

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

#### **2.1. Second part-session of 2017 (Strasbourg, 24-28 April)**

##### *2.1.1. Situation of the President of the Assembly*

On 28 April, the Bureau expressed no confidence in the President of the Assembly; it decided not to authorise the President to undertake any official visits, attend any meetings or make any public statements on behalf of the Assembly; and decided to make public this decision (see Appendix 1).

The Bureau took note of the Declaration unanimously adopted by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs on 27 April 2017 on *Principle of confidence in members and their duty of accountability when exercising their elective offices in the Parliamentary Assembly*.

On 29 May, following a vote, the Bureau confirmed its position of no confidence in the President of the Assembly and its decision not to authorise him to undertake any official visits, attend any meetings or make any public statements on behalf of the Assembly.



### 2.1.2. Follow-up to adopted texts

On 28 April, the Bureau approved the follow-up proposals made by the Secretary General of the Assembly to texts adopted by the Assembly and to the current affairs debate:

– Current affairs debate on *European values under threat: addressing rising xenophobia, antisemitism and islamophobia in Europe*: the Bureau decided to refer the matter to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination for consultation on the follow-up to be given.

– [Resolution 2162 \(2017\)](#) on *Alarming developments in Hungary: draft NGO law restricting civil society and possible closure of the European Central University* (Mr Mogens Jensen (Denmark, SOC), Rapporteur of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy):

*11. In conclusion, the Assembly believes that recent developments in Hungary merit its close attention as well as the mobilisation of Council of Europe expertise to help the Hungarian authorities ensure compliance with relevant Council of Europe and international standards in the field of freedom of association and expression. The Assembly therefore:*

*11.1. requests the opinion of the Venice Commission on the compatibility with Council of Europe standards of the Hungarian draft law on the Transparency of Organisations Receiving Foreign Funding, as well as of the Act of 4 April 2017 amending the National Higher Education Act;*

Follow-up: to request the Opinion of the Venice Commission as requested in paragraph 11.1.

*12. The Assembly resolves to continue to follow closely developments in Hungary.*

Follow-up: to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on Hungary in the context of the periodic review by the Monitoring Committee.

Finally, the Bureau took note of a letter dated 26 April 2017 by Mr Talip Küçükcan (Turkey, EC), Chairperson of the Turkish delegation to the Assembly, regarding [Resolution 2156 \(2017\)](#) on *Functioning of democratic institutions in Turkey*.

### 2.2. Standing Committee (Prague, 30 May 2017)

On 28 April and 29 May, the Bureau took note of the draft agenda.

### 2.3. Third part-session of 2017 (Strasbourg, 26-30 June)

On 28 April, the Bureau drew up the preliminary draft agenda. On 29 May, it drew up the draft agenda.

### 2.4. Composition of the independent external investigation body to look into allegations of corruption within the Assembly

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of the candidatures for membership in the independent external investigation body submitted by Bureau members as well as a letter by Ms Elena Centemero (Italy, EPP/CD), Chairperson of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, on the need to ensure gender balance in the composition of this body. The Bureau decided to close the list of candidatures; it confirmed the instruction to the Secretary General of the Assembly to hold private talks with the proposed candidates and come up with a proposal on the composition of the investigation body, with a view to submitting it to the Bureau for approval at its meeting in Prague on 29 May 2017.

On 29 May, the Bureau took note of two memoranda prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly on the composition of the independent external investigation body and appointed the members of the body (see chapter 4.1 below).

### 2.5. Delegation of the Assembly of Kosovo

On 29 May, the Bureau took note that, as of the June part-session 2017, the members of the delegation of the Assembly of Kosovo would be given access to the Assembly Chamber, without permanent seats being allocated to them.

## 2.6. Election observation

### 2.6.1. Armenia: parliamentary elections (2 April 2017)

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of the statement of the observation mission. On 29 May, it approved the report of the ad hoc committee.

### 2.6.2. Serbia: presidential election (2 April 2017)

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of the statement of the observation mission. On 29 May, it approved the report of the ad hoc committee.

### 2.6.3. Turkey: referendum on the constitutional amendments (16 April 2017)

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of the statement of the observation mission as well as of a press release by Mr Talip Küçükcan (Turkey, EC), Chairperson of the Turkish delegation to the Assembly. On 29 May, it approved the report of the ad hoc committee, as amended.

### 2.6.4. Albania: parliamentary elections (25 June 2017)

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of the invitation letter to observe these elections, approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee, and appointed Mr Paolo Corsini (Italy, SOC) as its Chairperson. On 29 May, the Bureau took note of the change of date of the elections, approved the revised list of members of the ad hoc committee (Appendix 2) and authorised the President of the Assembly to approve changes to the list of members that might be proposed by the political groups, if any.

## 2.7. References and transmissions to committees

### 2.7.1. References and transmissions to committees

On 28 April, in addition to the references and transmissions 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:

- [Doc. 14262](#), motion for a resolution, Russian racial discrimination of Crimean Tatars in Crimea: consultation of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) *on possible follow-up*;
- [Doc. 14263](#), motion for a resolution, Consequences on international law of the decision from the American Congress to allow victims' families of 9/11 to sue Saudi Arabia: *no further action*.

On 29 May, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions, which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee:

- [Doc. 14271](#), motion for a resolution, Protecting and supporting the victims of terrorism: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*;
- [Doc. 14275](#), motion for a resolution, Co-operation with United Nations human rights mechanisms – a challenge for the Council of Europe and its member States: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report*;
- [Doc. 14276](#), motion for a resolution, The humanitarian situation of refugees in the countries neighbouring Syria: transmission to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for information*;
- [Doc. 14295](#), motion for a resolution, Sergei Magnitsky and beyond – fighting impunity by targeted sanctions: transmission to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for information*;
- [Doc. 14296](#), motion for a resolution, A two-State solution in Israel and Palestine: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*;
- [Doc. 14299](#), motion for a resolution, A commitment to introduce rules to ensure fair referendums in Council of Europe member States: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*;

- [Doc. 14301](#), motion for a resolution, Human rights situation in the occupied regions of Georgia: consultation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *on possible follow-up*;
- [Doc. 14302](#), motion for a resolution, Review of regulations for election observations by the Parliamentary Assembly: no further action;
- Bureau decision, The situation in Kosovo<sup>1</sup>: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*.

### 2.7.2. Extension of references

On 29 May, the Bureau approved the following extensions of references, which do not require ratification:

- [Doc. 13555](#), motion for a resolution, Establishing genuine parliamentary dialogue with Algeria (Reference 4065 of 3 October 2014 – validity: 30 June 2017 (extended on 20 June 2016)): extension until 31 January 2018;
- [Doc. 13812](#), motion for a resolution, Libya's future between the threats of terrorism and a democratic prospect (Reference 4140 of 26 June 2015 – validity: 26 June 2017): extension until 31 January 2018;
- [Doc. 13280](#), motion for a recommendation, Co-ordination for efficient Internet governance (Reference 4000 of 30 September 2013 – validity: 30 June 2017 (extended on 24 June 2016)): extension until 30 June 2018;
- [Doc. 13484](#), motion for a resolution, Azerbaijan's Chairmanship of the Council of Europe: What follow-up on respect for human rights? (Ref. 4050 of 23 June 2014 – validity: 23 June 2017 (extended on 20 June 2016)): extension until 30 September 2017;
- [Doc. 13614](#), motion for a resolution, Strengthening the rule of law in South-East European countries through targeted reform of the legal system (Ref. 4087 of 17 November 2014 – validity: 30 June 2017 (extended on 14 October 2016)): extension until 31 October 2017.

### 2.7.3. Replies after consultation

- [Doc. 14190](#), motion for a resolution, Organ transplant tourism to China: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report with the title "Organ transplant tourism"*;
- [Doc. 14188](#), motion for a resolution, Illegal elections in the occupied Autonomous Republic of Crimea and in the city of Sebastopol: *no further action*;
- [Doc. 14094](#), motion for a resolution, Addressing the massive curtailment of democratic rights and freedoms in Israel, especially the "Transparency Law"/"NGO Law": *no further action*.

## 2.8. Václav Havel Human Rights Prize

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of the extension of the deadline for the submission of nominations to 30 June 2017. On 29 May, the Bureau took note of a memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly and, following a vote, appointed Ms Marie-Louise Bemelmans-Videc (Netherlands) as member of the Selection Panel.

## 2.9. World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 8-10 November 2017)

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of the concept paper and 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 30 June 2017.

## 2.10. Communications

On 29 May, the Bureau took note of communications by the President of the Assembly and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

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1. All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council [Resolution 1244](#) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

### **2.11. Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2017**

On 29 May, the Bureau approved the appointment of Ms Adele Gambaro (Italy, ALDE) as member of the Committee for Works of Art, as proposed by the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media.

### **2.12. Issues raised by committees**

#### *2.12.1. Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development*

On 28 April, the Bureau took note of a letter by the Chairperson of the Committee providing information on the preparation of the report on *Detention of Palestinian minors in Israeli prisons*.

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

On 28 April, the Bureau considered and approved the lists of candidates in respect of Denmark, France, Luxembourg, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, Norway and Serbia, which were subsequently transmitted to the Committee of Ministers.

## **3. Activities of the Standing Committee (Prague, 30 May 2017)**

The Standing Committee heard welcome addresses by Mr Milan Štěch, President of the Senate, and Mr Jan Hamáček, President of the Chamber of Deputies and held an exchange of views with Mr Lubomír Zaorálek, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Chairman 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 Belgium, Bulgaria and Serbia; it approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees. It took note of the draft agenda of the third part-session of the Assembly (26 – 30 June 2017) and ratified the references which are contained in chapter 2.7.

The Standing Committee held an exchange of views with Mr Paolo Alli, President of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

It took note of the reports of the ad hoc committees of the Bureau on the Observation of the parliamentary elections in Armenia (2 April 2017), Observation of the presidential election in Serbia (2 April 2017) and Observation of the referendum on the constitutional amendments in Turkey (16 April 2017). Finally, the Standing Committee adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

- [Opinion 294 \(2017\)](#) – Budget and priorities of the Council of Europe for the biennium 2018-2019;
- [Opinion 295 \(2017\)](#) – Draft protocol amending the Additional Protocol to the Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons (ETS No. 167);
- [Recommendation 2103 \(2017\)](#) – The political transition in Tunisia;
- [Recommendation 2104 \(2017\)](#) – Human rights of older persons and their comprehensive care;
- [Resolution 2165 \(2017\)](#) – Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the biennium 2018-2019;
- [Resolution 2166 \(2017\)](#) – The political transition in Tunisia;
- [Resolution 2167 \(2017\)](#) – The employment rights of domestic workers, especially women in Europe;
- [Resolution 2168 \(2017\)](#) – Human rights of older persons and their comprehensive care.

## **4. Decision of the Bureau requiring ratification by the Assembly**

### **4.1. Composition of the independent external investigation body to look into allegations of corruption within the Assembly**

On 29 May, following a vote, the Bureau appointed Sir Nicolas Bratza (United Kingdom), Mr Jean-Louis Bruguière (France) and Ms Elisabet Fura (Sweden) as members of the independent external investigation body.

**The Assembly is invited to ratify this Bureau decision.**

## Appendix 1 – Press release

### **PACE Bureau\* declares ‘no confidence’ in Pedro Agramunt as President**

28 April 2017 – The Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), meeting in Strasbourg today, resolved that it has no confidence in Pedro Agramunt as President of the Assembly.

It further resolved that Mr Agramunt is not authorised to undertake any official visits, attend any meetings or make any public statements on behalf of the Assembly in his capacity as President.

*“The President chose not to attend the Bureau today, and has not presented a letter of resignation. As a result, and in the context of the current Rules of Procedure under which the President cannot be compelled to resign, the Bureau felt it necessary to take these steps,” said Sir Roger Gale (United Kingdom, EC), Senior Vice-President of the Assembly, after chairing the Bureau meeting.*

*“The standards and principles of the Parliamentary Assembly are more important than any individual member, and the integrity of our Assembly must be upheld,” he added.*

\* The Bureau is responsible for the co-ordination of the activities of the Assembly and of its committees. It assists the President in his or her functions and guides the Assembly’s external relations. It takes decisions on the organisation of part-sessions and plenary sittings. It consists of the President, the twenty Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, the heads of the political groups and the chairpersons of the Assembly’s general committees.

**Appendix 2 – List of members of the ad hoc committee to observe the parliamentary elections in Albania (25 June 2017)**

**Chairperson:** Paolo CORSINI, Italy (SOC)

**Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD)**

- Elena CENTEMERO, Italy
- Yves POZZO di BORGIO, France
- Ionuț-Marian STROE, Romania
- Attila TILKI, Hungary

**Socialist Group (SOC)**

- Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria
- Predrag SEKULIĆ, Montenegro
- Jan ŠKOBBERNE, Slovenia
- Paolo CORSINI, Italy \*
- Marianne MIKKO, Estonia
- Florian KRONBICHLER, Italy
- Luis Alberto ORELLANA, Italy
- Idália SERRÃO, Portugal
- Miroslav NENUTIL, Czech Republic
- Joseph DEBONO-GRECH, Malta

*Substitute*

- Muslum MAMMADOV, Azerbaijan

**European Conservatives Group (EC)**

- Ingebjørg GODSKESEN, Norway \*
- Erkan KANDEMIR, Turkey
- Serhii KIRAL, Ukraine
- Jaroslaw OBREMSKI, Poland

**Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE)**

- Reina BRUIJN-WEZEMAN, Netherlands
- Eerik Niiles KROSS, Estonia \*
- Andrea RIGONI, Italy
- Mart van de VEN, Netherlands

*Substitute*

- Fernando MAURA, Spain

**Group of the Unified European Left (UEL)**

- Marco NICOLINI, San Marino \*

*Substitute*

- Miren Edurne GORROTXATEGUI, Spain

**Co-rapporteur of the Monitoring Committee (ex officio)**

- Joseph O'REILLY, Ireland

**Venice Commission**

- Nikolai VULCHANOV, Expert
- Mesut BEDIRHANOGLU, Administrator

**Secretariat**

- Bogdan TORCĂTORIU, Administrator, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Co-operation Division
- Franck DAESCHLER, Principal Administrative Assistant, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Co-operation Division
- Anne GODFREY, Assistant, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Co-operation Division

\* members of the pre-election delegation