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Activities of the President between the fourth part of the 2018 Ordinary Session and the first part of the 2019 Ordinary Session

Communication
President of the Assembly

1. Main activities

1.1. Activities of the President between 6 October and 16 November 2018

1.1.1. 4th part of the 2018 Ordinary Session

The fourth part of the 2018 Ordinary Session was an opportunity to hold a series of bilateral meetings, in particular with Mr Khemaies Jhinaoui, the Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ms Pascale Baeriswyl, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation, and several members of the Assembly.

With the Tunisian Minister of Foreign Affairs, we discussed the development of relations between the Council of Europe and Tunisia, particularly in the context of the Neighbourhood Partnership, the new version of which was launched during the Minister's visit to Strasbourg. While welcoming the excellent ongoing co-operation, I stressed the need for further development of political dialogue at all levels. In this connection, the Partnership for Democracy status could be an appropriate means of ensuring inter-parliamentary dialogue, and our discussion was encouraging in several respects. I hope that after the 2019 parliamentary elections we will be able to resume the discussions with the members of the Assembly of the Representatives of the People so that it too can acquire Partnership for Democracy status with the Assembly.

With the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Confederation, I discussed the institutional challenges facing the Council of Europe. The political support provided by the Swiss Confederation is an important message for the Council of Europe in general and the Assembly in particular.

In addition, during this part-session, I chaired the meeting of the Joint Committee and attended the working breakfast between the Presidential Committee of the Assembly and the Bureau of the Ministers' Deputies. These meetings were an opportunity for the two statutory bodies to hold an exchange of views on the institutional challenges we will have to address, and in particular the possible reform of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure regarding delegations' credentials and the possibility of challenging them. It was agreed to continue to hold regular discussions in this format and, in consultation with the Chair of the Ministers' Deputies, I have called the next meeting between the Assembly's Presidential Committee and the Bureau of the Ministers' Deputies for 13 December 2018.

Finally, it was an honour and a real pleasure for me to chair the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize award ceremony, which was held on 8 October 2018. This year, the prize was awarded to Mr Oyub Titiev, the head of the Grozny office of the "Memorial" human rights centre, Republic of Chechnya, Russian Federation. This prize is a message of support for Mr Titiev and those who work with him and also a political message to the national and local authorities.



1.1.2. 139th Plenary session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Geneva, Switzerland, 16 October 2018)

On 16 October 2018, on the occasion of the 139th Plenary session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, I participated the launch of the joint IPU-PACE study on “sexism, harassment and violence against women in European parliaments”, alongside the President of the IPU, Ms Gabriela Cuevas Barrón.

This regional study is based on in-depth interviews with 123 women from 45 European countries, 81 of them members of parliament and 42 members of parliamentary staff. It reveals a systemic problem within European parliaments involving not only violence but also a general sexist attitude that makes these practices seem almost acceptable.

In my speech, I called on all politicians, both male and female, to work to bring about change to ensure genuine equality. It is our duty to work together to change attitudes by taking action, breaking taboos and refusing to remain silent. It is vitally important to discuss and exchange ideas in order to make the necessary changes at legislative level. In this context, I also referred to the Istanbul Convention, which is the most advanced international instrument for preventing and combating violence against women.

During my visit to Geneva, I had the opportunity to hold talks with the President of the IPU, among others. We discussed the practical action to be taken in response to this study, in particular forwarding it to the Speakers of the parliaments of all Council of Europe member states.

1.1.3. Exchange of views with the Ministers’ Deputies (Strasbourg, 17 October 2018)

On 17 October 2018, I held an exchange of views with the Ministers’ Deputies, focusing on the outcomes of the October 2018 part-session, especially regarding the situation of the revision of the Rules of Procedure and the consequences of the Assembly’s decision to refer the report on “Strengthening the decision-making process of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning credentials and voting” back to the committee.

Furthermore, we confirmed our joint interest in holding regular discussions between the Committee of Ministers and the Assembly, especially through the Joint Committee, and meetings between the Bureau of the Ministers’ Deputies and the Presidential Committee.

On the side-lines of this exchange of views, I met Mr Michael O’Flaherty, Director of the European Union’s Fundamental Rights Agency. We emphasised the complementarity between the work of the Agency and that of the Council of Europe. With regard to co-operation with the Assembly, we discussed the possibility of organising study visits for Agency staff during the Assembly’s part-sessions to enable our colleagues to acquaint themselves with the Assembly’s work and with the priority issues dealt with by our committees. That should make it possible to improve the focus of our co-operation and to identify new synergies.

1.1.4. Commemoration of the centenary of the 11 November 1918 Armistice (Strasbourg, 4 November 2018)

At the invitation of the President of the French Republic, Mr Emmanuel Macron, I had the great honour to attend a concert at Strasbourg Cathedral on 4 November 2018 on the theme of European peace. This was the first stage in a much longer and ambitious series of events in the French areas of the former front to commemorate the centenary of the 11 November 1918 armistice.

On behalf of the Assembly, I expressed my deep gratitude to the French President for organising the event and conveying in Strasbourg a message of peace and confidence in Europe.

1.1.5. Participation in the conference on “Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, shared responsibility” (Dubrovnik, 6 November 2018)

On 6 November 2018, I participated in the conference on “Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, shared responsibility”, at which I gave an introductory speech and a presentation of the Partnership for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly as a means of developing co-operation and political dialogue with neighbouring countries.

I underscored the fact that the partnership was a tried and tested instrument for co-operation. It gives the representatives of the partner parliaments the same rights enjoyed by the members of the Assembly, with the exception of voting rights, and is based on the mutual commitments of the partner parliaments and the Assembly. I mentioned two aspects regarding evaluation of this partnership status. First, I stressed the need to derive the maximum benefit from the existing prerogatives, highlighting the possibilities of benefiting from the expertise of the Venice Commission and the Council of Europe’s monitoring bodies. I called on the partner

parliaments to urge their authorities to accede to the various Council of Europe conventions and partial agreements and to encourage the development of new co-operation initiatives under existing Council of Europe programmes. Second, I called on Assembly members and the representatives of the partner parliaments to step up their efforts to develop parliamentary diplomacy, especially in situations of crisis, conflict or civil war in the states on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. These crises are indeed a major challenge to democratic security in the region, and all Mediterranean states should produce a joint response.

On the margins of the conference, I held discussions with the representatives of the Algerian parliament and described to them the benefits of Partnership for Democracy status. I hope that the country's parliament will express its interest in being granted this status and am willing to continue the discussions in this regard, including during a possible visit to Algeria.

1.1.6. Other activities

On 30 October 2018, I met Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Mgcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. I told her about the joint PACE-IPU study on Sexism against women in parliaments. We discussed the possibilities of organising an event on the subject of the study on the side-lines of the next plenary meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women. In addition, I described to Ms Mlambo-Mgcuka the various Assembly reports currently being drawn up on issues relating to Agenda 2030 and gender equality. For her part, Ms Mlambo-Mgcuka informed me about the preparation of an international event that will take place in 2020 to mark the anniversary of the Beijing Conference and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted on that occasion. Regional conferences will be held in preparation for that event. The European event will probably be held in 2019 in The Hague. We agreed to combine our efforts to persuade parliamentarians to participate in and contribute to these events. Our Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination will be able to provide the necessary follow-up to these initiatives.

On 31 October 2018, I met Mr Gaudenz Silberschmidt, WHO Director for Partnerships and Non State Actors. He spoke of the desire of WHO and its new Director-General to strengthen the parliamentary oversight of WHO and informed me about the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between WHO and the Inter-Parliamentary Union. He also mentioned the idea of holding a meeting of the chairs of the health committees of national parliaments, which could be convened by WHO and in which the Assembly could be involved as far as Europe is concerned. Finally, he put forward the idea of looking into the possibility for our Assembly to act as a European WHO parliamentary assembly. I informed the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development about these discussions so that it can ensure the necessary follow-up.

1.2. Activities of the President between 17 November 2018 and 8 December 2018

1.2.1. World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018)

Speaking at the World Forum for Democracy, I called for a cultural shift over sexist violence which can be achieved by resolute and consistent condemnation of any acts of violence against women as well as by awareness-raising and prevention activities. Moreover, I raised concern linked to more subtle obstacles to gender equality, such as stereotypes and clichés about the respective roles of women and men in society which continue to exist.

Against this background, I drew the participants' attention to the Council of Europe Convention to prevent and combat violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention) which is a unique international legal instrument that contains practical legal tools to prevent and combat violence against women. I called on participants to promote the ratification of this Convention which is also open for accession by non-member states of the Council of Europe.

1.2.2. Meetings with the Finnish authorities and Assembly meetings in Helsinki (Presidential Committee, Bureau, Standing Committee) (Helsinki, 21-23 November 2018)

On 21-23 November 2018, I travelled to Finland to participate in Assembly meetings (Presidential Committee, Bureau and Standing Committee) organised within the framework of the Finnish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, as well as to hold bilateral talks with Finnish officials.

The Assembly meetings were an opportunity to hold a first exchange of views with the Finnish authorities about the priorities of the Presidency. The priorities – in particular, the strengthening of Europe's system of human rights and the rule of law, promoting equality and women's rights, and the focus on openness and

inclusiveness and on young people and the prevention of radicalisation – fully correspond to the Assembly's own special areas of interests and, in this context, the Assembly can look forward to a fruitful co-operation with the Finnish authorities.

The meeting of the Standing Committee was an opportunity to launch the hashtag initiative #NotInMyParliament focusing on combating sexism, harassment and violence against women in parliaments in Europe. I am grateful to the Speaker of the Finnish Parliament for her support for this initiative. All European parliaments must send a clear message of zero tolerance for intimidation, sexist behaviour, harassment and gender-based violence, wherever it occurs. This initiative can also be an encouragement for others outside parliaments. Hashtags like #NotInMyTown, #NotInMyUniversity, #NotInMyTeam etc. may also be used and I encouraged my interlocutors to show imagination and creativity.

Furthermore, the event organised around the report on "Protecting and promoting sign languages in Europe" with the participation of the Finnish rap artist "Signmark", who was born deaf, performing songs in sign language, was a highlight of the meeting and an opportunity to draw attention to the importance of official recognition of sign languages so that deaf persons can exercise their fundamental rights.

In the margins of the Assembly meetings, I held talks with the Finnish authorities, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, representatives of the Ministry of Justice, the Speaker of the Finnish Parliament, the members of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee, members of the Finnish Delegation to the Assembly, representatives of the Nordic Council Presidium, representatives of the Human Rights Centre, the Deputy Ombudsperson, and representatives of the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters. Inter alia, we discussed the challenges that the Council of Europe and the Parliamentary Assembly currently face, and I welcomed the clear commitment of the Finnish authorities to assisting the Parliamentary Assembly to find solutions to improve the dialogue between the Assembly and the Russian Federation and to resolve the impasse that currently exists.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Finnish authorities, and the Finnish Parliament in particular, for their extraordinary hospitality and the excellent organisation of the meetings.

1.2.3. Working visit to Strasbourg (26 November 2018)

- Visit of H.S.H The Hereditary Prince of Liechtenstein (Strasbourg, 26 November 2018)

I had the honour and the privilege to meet and discuss with H.S.H. the Hereditary Prince of Liechtenstein and H.R.H. the Hereditary Princess of Liechtenstein. In our discussions we could touch upon the importance of multilateralism, in particular for small countries such as Liechtenstein, as well as the current challenges facing Europe and the Council of Europe. I also had the opportunity to express thanks to the authorities of Liechtenstein for their generous voluntary contributions to the Council of Europe, including to the Parliamentary Assembly.

- Seminar on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the new Court (Strasbourg, 26 November 2018)

In my statement at the Seminar, I expressed the Assembly's full support to the European Court of Human Rights, as the guardian of the Pan-European Human Rights Convention System. I highlighted the role that the Assembly was playing in supporting the implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights, in particular by preparing reports on recurring and systemic human rights issues in our member states, overseeing the executive's activities in the implementation of the Court's judgements and providing training to parliamentarians and members of parliamentary staff regarding the Convention. Furthermore, I highlighted the Court's role in interpreting the Convention as a "living instrument" while preserving the State Parties' primary role of "legislators" of the Convention.

1.2.4. Visit to Portugal and participation in the Congress of the Party of European Socialists (Lisbon, 6-8 December 2018)

On 6-8 December 2018, I travelled to Lisbon (Portugal) to hold bilateral meetings with the Portuguese authorities as well as to participate in the annual Congress of the Party of European Socialists. In particular, I met the Speaker of the Assembly of the Republic, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, members of the Portuguese delegation to the Assembly, as well as a number of Assembly members and members of the European Parliament participating in the Congress.

I thanked the Portuguese authorities for their strong commitment to and support for the Council of Europe, as exemplified in particular by the large number of Council of Europe conventions ratified and the good co-operation with the Council of Europe monitoring bodies. Among other matters, we discussed the worrying rise of populist, xenophobic and extreme political forces, as well as the implications of this for European and national elections in many of our member states in 2019. We also discussed the democratic mechanisms to overcome this challenge, the future of the Council of Europe and the relations between the Council of Europe and the Russian Federation. We agreed on the need to preserve the unity of the Organisation and the Pan-European character of the European Convention on Human Rights system. We should use all avenues for dialogue at our disposal to bring positions closer and I am grateful to the Portuguese authorities for their support.

The rise of populism and extreme political forces, the challenges to our democratic and social system, sustainable migration management, as well as gender equality dominated the debates at the Congress of the Party of European Socialists. I was particularly encouraged by the committed and determined speeches of many participants in support of the European democratic and social model of governance. The debates clearly demonstrated that, in view of the many challenges Europe is currently facing, the democratic political forces across the board must unite to defend the values that form the basis of the European project, in words and in deeds.

I seized this opportunity to promote the Assembly's new hashtag initiative #NotInMyParliament with the Portuguese authorities and the participants in the Congress, focusing in particular on the results of joint PACE-IPU Study on sexism, harassment and violence against women in national parliaments. I called on the Members of Parliament to speak out against and take action to combat sexism and harassment in their national parliaments, as well as in their constituencies, local authorities and communities. I was encouraged by their enthusiastic support.

Finally, I seized this opportunity to visit the Council of Europe North-South Centre. We discussed the co-operation between the Centre and the Parliamentary Assembly, in particular in three areas of common interest, i.e. youth, global education and gender equality. The Centre and the co-operation programmes it implements constitute substantive elements of the neighbourhood co-operation partnerships that the Council of Europe is carrying out. In this context, the Centre's co-operation with Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia is particularly important for the Assembly. Furthermore, the Centre's global outreach offers the opportunity to promote Council of Europe instruments and tools with non-member states of the Organisation in many fields. In this context, I encouraged the Centre to promote in its activities our tools to achieve gender equality and to prevent and combat violence against women, in particular the new Assembly's hashtag initiative #NotInMyParliament.

1.3. Activities of the President between 9 December 2018 and 18 January 2019

1.3.1. Conference "Women's Economic Independence is a Human Right" (Tallinn, Estonia, 9-10 December 2018)

At the invitation of the Speaker of the Estonian Parliament, I attended the Conference entitled "Women's Economic Independence is a Human Right" held at the Estonian Parliament on 9-10 December 2018, in the framework of International Human Rights Day. In my address, I pointed out that economic development would increase substantially if women and men could contribute to it on an equal basis. Speaking about the need to bridge the pay gap, I referred to good practice examples from member states, including Iceland, Germany and the United Kingdom, where special measures have been taken which require transparency over pay inequality and which promote a gender equality mindset among employers and employees. Furthermore, I referred to the experience of Scandinavian countries where special conditions are created to encourage sharing of responsibility for child care between mothers and fathers. Moreover, I used this opportunity to promote the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence as a unique legally binding international instrument against gender-based discrimination leading to gender-based violence. In this context, I presented the Assembly's hashtag initiative #NotInMyParliament.

In the margins of the Conference, I held bilateral talks with the Estonian authorities, including the Speaker of Parliament and the Minister of Culture. We discussed a range of issues, including the forthcoming elections in Estonia and in Europe and the ways to counteract the dangerous rise of populist political forces. We also discussed Estonia's relations with neighbouring states, ways to address modern technological challenges, including digitalisation, e-elections and cyber-security, as well as a number of domestic issues, such as the situation of the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia.

I would like to thank the Estonian Parliament and the Chairperson of the Estonian delegation, Ms Marianne Mikko for the excellent organisation of the Conference and their outstanding hospitality.

1.3.2. Assembly meetings (Paris, 13-14 December 2018)

On 13-14 December 2018, I attended the meetings of the Presidential Committee and Bureau of the Assembly. The Bureau of the Assembly took note of the opinion of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs regarding the revision of the list of rights of participation and representation where exercise may be deprived of or suspended in the context of a challenge of credentials under Rule 10.1.c of the Assembly Rules of Procedure and decided to declassify it.

On 13 December 2018, the Presidential Committee held an informal exchange of views with the Bureau of the Ministers' Deputies, with the participation of the Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe. We discussed the relations between the Russian Federation and the Council of Europe as well as the format for future consultations between the Assembly and the Committee of Ministers. It was agreed to hold the next meeting during the Assembly's January 2019 part-session, with the participation of the Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland.

1.3.3. Working visits to Strasbourg (19-20 December 2018, 7-8 and 15-16 January 2019)

During these visits, I held bilateral meetings with the Chairperson of the Ministers' Deputies and a number of Ambassadors of Council of Europe member states.

On 16 January 2019, I laid a wreath at the place Kléber in Strasbourg, to pay tribute to the victims of the 11 December 2018 terrorist attack in Strasbourg, in the presence of Mr Roland Ries, Mayor, and Ms Nawel Rafik-Elmrini, Deputy to the Mayor of the City of Strasbourg.

1.3.4. Meeting with the members of the Russian Parliament (Geneva, 14 January 2019)

On 14 January 2019, I met the representatives of the Russian Parliament, Mr Piotr Tolstoy, Vice-speaker of the State Duma of the Russian Federation, and Mr Konstantin Kosachev, Chairperson of the Committee on International Affairs of the Federation Council. We discussed the relations between the Russian Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly and the recent steps the Assembly had taken in reviewing its Rules of Procedure.

2. Speeches

- Statement at the opening of the 4th part of the 2018 ordinary session (Strasbourg, 8 October 2018)
- Speech delivered at the award ceremony of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2018 (Strasbourg, 8 October 2018)
- Laudatio at the ceremony to award "Honorary Associate" titles to outgoing Assembly members: Mr Michele Nicoletti, former President of the Assembly, Italy, Mr Joe Benton, United Kingdom, Ms Eleonora Katseli, Greece, Mr Ertuğrul Kürkçü, Turkey (8 October 2018)
- Introductory words to the meeting of the European Association of former parliamentarians of member states of the Council of Europe (Strasbourg, 12 October 2018)
- Speech on the occasion of the launch of the joint IPU-PACE study on "sexism, harassment and violence against women in European parliaments" (Geneva, 16 October 2018)
- Speech delivered at the conference on "Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, shared responsibility" (Dubrovnik, 6 November 2018)
- Statement at the launch event of the campaign Start to Talk (Strasbourg, 19 November 2018)
- Speech at the World Forum for Democracy: Plenary Session 2, Time to stop sexism, discrimination and violence against women! (Strasbourg, 19 November 2018)
- Opening speech at the meeting of the Standing Committee (Helsinki, 23 November 2018)
- Statement at the Seminar on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of the New Court (Strasbourg, 26 November 2018)

- Speech on “Role and challenges of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, more important than ever to defend human rights, democracy and the rule of law” at the interdepartmental meeting “Council of Europe” at the Federal Directorate of Foreign Affairs (DFAE) (Bern, Switzerland, 3 December 2018)
- Address at the Conference “Women’s Economic Independence is a Human Right” at the Estonian Parliament (Riigikogu) (Tallinn, 10 December 2018)

3. Press releases

- #MeToo: alarming levels of sexual abuse and violence found in parliaments (15 October 2018)
- PACE President opens Dubrovnik conference with appeal to shared values (6 November 2018)
- President urges a ‘cultural shift’ over violence against women (20 November 2018)
- PACE President called on Turkey to swiftly implement the ECtHR’s judgment and release Selahattin Demirtaş (22 November 2018)
- Finland is a ‘calm and steady hand’ at Council of Europe helm, says President (23 November 2018)
- Concern over escalating tension between the Russian Federation and Ukraine in the Azov Sea (26 November 2018)
- On Anti-corruption Day, President underlines role of parliamentarians in stamping out corruption (7 December 2018)
- PACE President pays tribute to Ludmilla Alexeeva (8 December 2018)
- PACE President reflects on 70 years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (10 December 2018)
- President calls for ‘a new momentum’ for achieving gender equality (10 December 2018)
- President conveys her condolences and support to the French people (12 December 2018)
- President Liliane Maury Pasquier’s New Year wishes for 2019 (31 December 2018)

4. Personalities met

4.1. 4th part of the 2018 Ordinary Session (Strasbourg, 8-12 October 2018)

- Members of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2018 selection panel
- Candidates for the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize 2018
- Ms Ana Rurka, President, Ms Anne Kraus, Vice President, Mr Christoph Spreng, Vice President, Ms Anne Nègre, Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe
- Ms Catalina Devandas, UN Special representative on disability issues
- Mr Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Tunisia
- Ms Arpine Hovhannisyan, Chairperson, delegation of Armenia
- Ms Maria Guzenina, Chairperson, delegation of Finland
- Ms Pascale Baeriswyl, State Secretary for Foreign affairs, Switzerland
- Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia
- Representatives of Open Dialogue Foundation
- Baroness Doreen Massey of Darwen, Ms Stella Kyriakides, Ms Martine Mergen, Ms Carina Ohlsson, Mr Vernon Coaker and Lord Don Touhig, Assembly members
- Mr Viorel Riceard Badea, Member of the Delegation of Romania
- Mr Paruyr Hovhannisyan, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the Council of Europe
- Ms Lena Nazaryan, Leader of the Way-Out Alliance faction in National Assembly, Armenia

- Dr Bernard Sabella, Chairperson, Palestine Delegation of Partners for Democracy to the Assembly
- Ms Gudrun Mosler-Törnström, President, Congress of local and regional authorities of the Council of Europe
- Mr Ivan Soltanovsky, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the Council of Europe

4.2. 139th Plenary session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (Geneva, Switzerland, 16 October 2018)

- Ms Gabriela Cuevas Barrón, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union
- Ms Dragana Filipović, Head of Office, Permanent Observer, Permanent Delegation of the Council of Europe to the United Nations Office and other international organisations in Geneva
- Ms Manuela Tomei, Director, Conditions of Work and Equality Department, International Labour Organization
- Mr Lorenzo Córdova, President, National Electoral Institute of Mexico
- Ms Michelle Rempel, Member of the House of Commons of Canada
- Mr Konstantin Kosachev, Vice-President of the Interparliamentary Union, Member of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation

4.3. Working visit in Strasbourg (17 October 2018)

- Mr Michael O’Flaherty, Director of the Agency for Fundamental Rights of the European Union

4.4. Meetings in Switzerland (30-31 October 2018)

- Mr Gaudenz Silberschmidt, Director for Partnerships and non-State actors, World Health Organisation
- Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women

4.5. Commemoration of the centenary of the 11 November 1918 Armistice (Strasbourg, 4 November 2018)

- Mr Emmanuel Macron, President of France

4.6. Participation in the conference on “Building democratic security in the Mediterranean: Common challenges, shared responsibility” (Dubrovnik, 6 November 2018)

- Mr Gordan Jandroković, Speaker of the Croatian Parliament
- Ms Marija Pejčinović Burić, Chairperson of the Committee of Ministers, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia
- Mr Mato Franković, Mayor of Dubrovnik
- Ms Sanja Putica, Chairperson of the Croatian Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe
- Professor Vlatko Cvrtila, PhD, President of the Croatian Council of Universities and University Colleges of Applied Sciences, Rector of Verni University, Zagreb
- Ms Gabriela Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Mr Marin Mrčela (Croatia), President of the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO)
- Mr Mario Janeček (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Chairperson of the Council of Europe Committee on Counter-Terrorism (CDCT)
- Mr Driss El Yazami (Morocco), Chairperson of the National Human Rights Council

- Mr Gianni Buquicchio, President of the Venice Commission
- Mr George Loucaides, Chairperson of the *ad hoc* Sub-Committee of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy

4.7. World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 19-21 November 2018)

- Ms Feride Acar, President of GREVIO, Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)
- Ms Shiori Ito, journalist, Japan
- Ms Rosemary McCarney, Canadian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament to the programme
- Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

4.8. Meetings with the Finnish authorities and Assembly meetings in Helsinki (Presidential Committee, Bureau, Standing Committee) (Helsinki, 21-23 November 2018)

- Ms Sirpa Rautio, Director, Human Rights Centre
- Ms Maija Sakslin, Deputy Ombudsperson
- Ms Kristiina Kouros, Expert, Human Rights Centre
- Ms Riita Säkälä, Secretary General of the Federation of Mother and Child Homes and Shelters, and Ms Sari Laaksonen, staff of the Centre
- Mr Matti Vanhanen, MP, Chairperson, and Members of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Finnish parliament
- Mr Erkki Tuomioja, MP, former Minister of Foreign Affairs 2000-2007, 2011-2015, Member of the Nordic Council Presidium, Nordic Council Rapporteur on the Russian Federation, Belarus and the Northern Dimension
- Mr Wille Rydman, MP, Member of the Nordic Council Presidium, Nordic Council Rapporteur on the United Kingdom and BIPA
- Ms Mari Herranen, Counsellor, Secretary of the Finnish Delegation to the Nordic Council;
- Mr Pekka Timonen, Secretary General of the Ministry of Justice of Finland
- Mr Timo Soini, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe
- Ms Anna Rurka, President, INGO conference of the Council of Europe
- Ms Paula Risikko, Speaker of the Finnish Parliament (Eduskunta)
- Mr Matti Anttonen, Secretary of State, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- Ms Maria Guzenina, President of the Finnish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly
- Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

4.9. Working visit to Strasbourg (26 November 2018)

- H.S.H. the Hereditary Prince of Liechtenstein and H.R.H. the Hereditary Princess of Liechtenstein

4.10. Visit to Portugal and participation in the Congress of the Party of European Socialists (Lisbon, 6-8 December 2018)

- Leaders of socialist groups from different Assemblies (OSCE, NATO, etc.)
- Mr Eduardo Ferro Rodrigues, President of the Assembly of Portugal
- Mr Augusto Santos Silva, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Portugal

4.11. World Conference “Women’s Economic Independence is a Human Right (Tallinn, Estonia, 9-10 December 2018)

- Mr Eiki Nestor, Speaker of the Estonian Parliament (Riigikogu)
- Mr Mihkel Liivo, Advisor to the Speaker
- Mr Jevgeni Ossinovski, Leader of the Social Democrat Party
- Ms Karmen Laus, Director of the international organisation’s office of the Estonian Parliament
- Mr Arni Alandi, Estonian journalist
- Mr Indrek Saar, Minister for Culture of Estonia
- Mr Silver Meikar, Advisor to the Minister of Culture of Estonia
- Ms Reet Palis, Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Estonia
- Ms Riina Sikkut, Minister of Health and Labour of Estonia
- Ms Marianne Mikko, Chairperson of the Estonian delegation to the Assembly
- Mr Frank Schwabe, Chairperson of Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group of the Assembly
- Mr Anders Herkel, Member of the Estonian delegation to the Assembly

4.12. Assembly meetings (Paris, 13-14 December 2018)

- Members of the Bureau of the Committee of Ministers
- Mr Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General
- Ms Gabriella Battaini-Dragoni, Deputy Secretary General

4.13. Working visits to Strasbourg (19-20 December 2018, 7-8 and 15-16 January 2019)

- Ms Satu Mattila-Budich, Chairperson of the Ministers’ Deputies, Permanent Representative of Finland to the Council of Europe
- Mr Kaan Esener, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the Council of Europe
- Mr Fakhraddin Ismayilov, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan to the Council of Europe
- Mr Roland Ries, Mayor of Strasbourg
- Ms Nawel Rafik-Elmrini, Deputy to the Mayor of Strasbourg

4.14. Meeting with the members of the Russian Parliament (Geneva, 14 January 2019)

- Mr Piotr Tolstoy, Vice-Speaker of the State Duma of the Russian Federation
- Mr Konstantin Kosachev, Chairperson of the Committee on International Affairs of the Federation Council