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Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (28 June 2019)

Progress report
Bureau of the Assembly
Rapporteur: Ms Petra De SUTTER, Belgium, Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group

1. Decisions of the Bureau of 28 June 2019 requiring ratification by the Assembly

1.1. References and transmissions to committees

The Bureau considered and approved the following reference:

– Doc. 14929, Motion for a resolution, *Ensuring accountability for the downing of flight MH 17*: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report*.

1.2. Composition of the Monitoring Committee and of the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights

1.2.1. Monitoring Committee

The Bureau,

– on the basis of a proposal by the ALDE Group, appointed Mr Eerik-Niiles Kross (Estonia)

– on the basis of a proposal by the EPP/CD Group, appointed Mr Mihail Popsoi (Republic of Moldova) and Mr Ruben Rubinyan (Armenia).

1.2.2. Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights

The Bureau, on the basis of a proposal by the EPP/CD Group, appointed Mr Jason Azzopardi (Malta).

1.3. OECD Global Parliamentary Network (Paris, 10 0ctober 2019)

The Bureau decided to set up an ad hoc committee of the Bureau to participate in the OECD Global Parliamentary Network to be held in Paris on 10 October 2019, approved its composition and appointed Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier, President of the Assembly, as its Chairperson.

1.4. Requests for urgent procedure or current affairs debates: admissibility and selection criteria

The Bureau took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly and approved the admissibility and selection criteria of requests for urgent procedure or current affairs debates (see appendix).

The Assembly is invited to ratify these Bureau decisions.

Appendix - Decision of the Bureau on admissibility and selection criteria of requests for urgent procedure or current affairs debates

In line with Rules 51 and 53 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure, it is the responsibility of the Bureau of the Assembly to submit to the Assembly proposals for urgent procedure or current affairs debates on the basis of requests submitted to it.

1. When proposing to the Assembly to hold a debate under urgent procedure, the selection criteria for the Bureau shall be the following:

– relative urgency (as opposed to topicality), taking into account the need for time to prepare proper draft text;

– the political, social or economic context at the particular point in time justifying the urgency, with the subject-matter either being a new one for the Assembly or an ongoing subject which had come to a culminating point;

– the controversial nature of the subject-matter, which implied higher participation by members and a bigger impact of the text adopted;

– the number of member States affected;

– the number and relative priority of all the requests tabled.

2. When proposing to the Assembly to hold a current affairs debate, the selection criteria for the Bureau shall be the following:

– the topicality of the subject-matter (as opposed to the urgency);

– the interest in the subject-matter by a large number of members of the Assembly and member States of the Council of Europe;

– the input which a debate could provide for an Assembly committee thereafter to draw up a report;

– the visibility in the media which a debate could engender.

3. The above criteria are not biding but are designed to help the Bureau in taking a decision.

4. The following explanatory footnote shall be added to Rule 51.2. of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure:

"The Assembly does not have the competence to turn a request for a debate under urgent procedure into a current affairs debate".

5. The following explanatory footnote shall be added to Rule 53.3. of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure:

"If a member of the Assembly objects to the decision of the Bureau to reject a request for a current affairs debate, and if the Assembly endorses the decision of the Bureau, by a majority of the votes cast, the Assembly will not hold such a current affairs debate. If the Assembly rejects the decision of the Bureau, by a majority of the votes cast, the Assembly will hold this current affairs debate.

A member of the Assembly who objects to the decision of the Bureau to reject all requests for a current affairs debate shall specify their objection, clarifying which specific current affairs debate they wish to propose to be held by the Assembly. If the Assembly approves the decision of the Bureau, by a majority of the votes cast, the Assembly will hold no current affairs debate. If the Assembly rejects the decision of the Bureau, by a majority of the votes cast, the Assembly will hold the current affairs debate which has been the subject of the contestation.

The Assembly does not have the competence to turn a request for a current affairs debate into a debate under urgent procedure. The Assembly does not have the competence to change the title of a current affairs debate."

6. The Bureau shall have right to transform a request for a current affairs debate into an urgent procedure debate and vice versa, subject to provisions of paragraph 8 below.

7. The Bureau shall have right to change the title of an urgent procedure or a current affairs debate, subject to provisions of paragraph 8 below.

8. For both the transformation of a request and the change of the title by the Bureau, the prior agreement of those who made the original request (or their representatives) shall be required. If such an agreement is not obtained, the Bureau cannot proceed with neither transformation of a request nor change of the title.