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Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (31 January 2020-21 January 2021)

Progress report
Bureau of the Assembly
Rapporteur: Mr Ian LIDDELL-GRAINGER, United Kingdom, European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance

1. Introduction

At its meeting on 31 January 2020, the Bureau appointed me as rapporteur for this report, which exceptionally covers a whole year of activities. It covers the activities over the period from the last Bureau meeting of the January part-session of 2020 (Friday 31 January) to the first Bureau meeting of the January part-session of 2021 (Friday 22 January) including the Bureau meetings held on 5 March in Paris, on 30 April, 7 May, 25 June, 14 September, 12 October, 19 November and 9 December, all last seven by videoconference. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the April part-session (20-24 April) and the June part-session (22 to 26 June) did not take place. The October part-session was replaced by a meeting of the "enlarged" Standing Committee (on 12-13 October, and on 22-23 October).

During the reporting period, the Parliamentary Assembly has taken a series of measures intended to adapt its working procedures in response to the exceptional situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, in order to maintain its activities. These measures have been taken on an exceptional and provisional basis (Chapter 2.4). Chapter 2 of the report presents a list of activities and decisions which do not require ratification. Chapter 3 presents decisions which have already been ratified by the Assembly on 31 January and by the Standing Committee on 6 March, 30 April, 7 May, 26 June, 15 September, 13 October and 22-23 October, on 20 November and on 4 December. Chapter 4 presents decisions to be ratified by the Assembly on Monday 25 January 2021.

An addendum to this report will be issued after the Bureau meeting of Friday 22 January 2021, which will also include decisions to be ratified on 25 January by the Assembly.

The Bureau will hold its next meeting in Strasbourg by videoconference on Friday 22 January at 9:30 am, then on 1 February. The next meeting of the Standing Committee will be held in Berlin in March 2021.

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

2.1. First part-session of 2020 (Strasbourg, 27-31 January)

On 31 January, the Bureau approved the follow-up proposals to the texts adopted by the Assembly, made by the Secretary General of the Assembly, as follows:

– Reference on *Modification of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure – follow-up to Resolution 2319 (2020) on the Complementary joint procedure between the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly in response to a serious violation by a member State of its statutory obligations*, to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, *for report*;

– Reference on *Gender representation in the Parliamentary Assembly*, to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, *for report* and to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, *for opinion*;

– Reference on *Recent developments in Libya and in the Middle East: what consequences for Europe?* to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, *for report*.

2.2. Standing Committee meeting (Paris, 6 March 2020)

On 31 January, the Bureau took note of the draft agenda.

On 5 March, the Bureau:

– *Request for a current affairs debate*: took note of the request tabled by Mr Tiny Kox (Netherlands, UEL), on behalf of the UEL Group, to hold a current affairs debate on "Recent developments at the Turkish-Greek-Bulgarian borders: how to safeguard human rights?", and decided to recommend to the Standing Committee to hold the proposed current affairs debate and to appoint Mr Tiny Kox as the first speaker in the debate;

– *Draft agenda*: took note of the revised draft agenda.

2.3. Second, third and fourth part-sessions of 2020

On 31 January, the Bureau drew up the preliminary draft agenda of the April 2020 part-session. On 5 March, it drew up the draft agenda.

On 16 March, following a written consultation, the Bureau decided to cancel the April part-session.

On 30 April, the Bureau decided to postpone the summer part-session of the Assembly, scheduled to be held in Strasbourg on 22-26 June 2020, to a later date before the October part-session. This part-session has been subsequently cancelled.

On 14 September, the Bureau agreed with the Presidential Committee's proposal – in view of the sanitary situation – to replace the October part-session of the Assembly by a meeting of the "enlarged" Standing Committee (on 12-13 October, to be continued on 22-23 October) and left it to the President to decide whether to convene it physically or remotely.

2.4. Organisation of the work of the Assembly in view of the Covid-19 pandemic: supplementary working methods and arrangements for the conduct of remote meetings

On 30 April, the Bureau approved the memorandum on Committees' decision-making framework and decided its entry into force as from the day of its approval; authorised the tabling of motions for resolutions and recommendations through electronic means with scanned signatures of members, until the next part-session of the Assembly in Strasbourg and extended by six months the validity of all current references to committees; and agreed to resume consideration of detailed arrangements for the conduct of remote committee meetings at its next meeting.

On 7 May, the Bureau approved the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly, agreed that the arrangements for the conduct of remote meetings specified in it would apply *mutatis mutandis* to its own remote meetings and decided that these arrangements will enter into force as from the day of their approval and remain in force until the opening of the nearest part-session of the Assembly in Strasbourg. It approved the proposal to extend by six months the former rapporteurs' responsibility for ensuring the follow-up to their reports (Rule 50.1 of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure).

On 25 June, the Bureau took note that it would not be possible to hold the summer part-session of the Assembly, and held an exchange of views on the preparation of the meetings of the Bureau and of the Standing Committee in Chania (Greece) on 14-16 September 2020, as well as on the next part-session in October (12-16 October 2020) and the Bureau and Standing Committee meetings in Berlin (19 and 20 November 2020).

On 14 September, the Bureau took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly; requested the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs to propose to the Assembly necessary changes to its Rules of Procedure in order to enable a plenary session of the Assembly, including the election of personalities, to be held in January 2021 (physically or in hybrid or

remote mode); and decided to prolong the mandate of the current Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly until the end of February 2021, subject to agreement with the Committee of Ministers to be reached within the Joint Committee.

On 19 November, the Bureau took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly, and decided, by anticipation and subject to the adoption by the Standing Committee on 20 November 2020 of the draft resolution on Modification of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure on alternative arrangements for the organisation of Parliamentary Assembly part-sessions presented by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, taking account of the exceptional circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic, that committee meetings will be held in a hybrid manner (combined remote and in-person participation of members) or by electronic means of remote communication during the period from 23 November 2020 until 31 January 2021. In accordance with Rule 48.1, the committee chairperson shall decide on the format which he or she deems most appropriate when convening the meeting, taking into account safety and accessibility conditions

2.5. Standing Committee meeting (by videoconference, 30 April 2020)

On 30 April, the Bureau took note of the request tabled on 24 April 2020 by the five political groups, to hold a current affairs debate on "Response of Council of Europe member States to the COVID-19 pandemic with respect to human rights, democracy and the rule of law", decided to recommend to the Standing Committee to hold this current affairs debate and to appoint Mr Jacques Maire (France, ALDE) as first speaker in the debate, and took note of the draft agenda.

2.6. Standing Committee meeting (by videoconference, 7 May 2020)

On 7 May, the Bureau took note of the draft agenda.

2.7. Bureau and Standing Committee meetings in Athens (28-29 May 2020)

On 5 March, the Bureau took note of the draft programme and the practical information.

On 7 May, the Bureau took note that the meeting of the Bureau foreseen in Athens end of May has been scheduled for September in Greece.

On 18 August, the Bureau and the Standing Committee members were informed that the meetings foreseen in Chania (Greece) for the week of 14th September were to be replaced by "virtual" meetings.

2.8. Joint Committee (by videoconference, 25 June 2020)

On 25 June, the Bureau prepared the meeting of the Joint Committee, and took note of the request by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for an exceptional prolongation of the mandate of the current postholder of Deputy Secretary General, Ms Battaini-Dragoni, until the end of the month following the month of the election of her successor by the Parliamentary Assembly and decided to support this request.

2.9. Standing Committee meeting (by videoconference, 26 June 2020)

On 26 June, the Bureau took note that Mr Tiny Kox (Netherlands, UEL) withdrew the request tabled on behalf of the UEL Group to hold a current affairs debate on "The consequences of a possible Israeli annexation of the occupied Palestinian Territories". It also took note of the revised draft agenda.

2.10. Standing Committee meeting (by videoconference, 15 September 2020)

On 14 September, the Bureau took note of the request tabled by Mr Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland, SOC), and 34 members of the Assembly, to hold a current affairs debate on "The events and current situation in Belarus", decided to recommend to the Standing Committee to hold this current affairs debate and to appoint Mr Kimmo Kiljunen (Finland, SOC), as first speaker in the debate. It also took note of the revised draft agenda.

2.11. Standing Committee meeting (by videoconference, 12-13 October and 22-23 October 2020)

On 12 October, the Bureau took note of the request by Mr Tiny Kox (Netherlands, UEL), on behalf of the UEL Group, to transform their request tabled on 28 September 2020 to hold a current affairs debate on *"New crack down of political and social opposition in Turkey: how to safeguard human rights, fundamental freedoms and the protection of Turkish citizens by the European Court of Human Rights?"* into a request for a debate under

urgent procedure and decided to recommend to the Standing Committee to hold this debate under urgent procedure and to refer the matter to the Monitoring Committee. It also took note of the request tabled by the Monitoring Committee on 5 October 2020 to hold a current affairs debate on *"Armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, failure of peaceful conflict resolution and a risk to regional stability"* and decided to recommend to the Standing Committee to hold this current affairs debate and to appoint Mr Michael Aastrup Jensen (Denmark, ALDE), as first speaker in the debate. It also took note of the revised draft agenda.

On 19 November, the Bureau approved the follow-up proposals by the Secretary General of the Assembly to the current affairs debate and decided to refer the issue of *Humanitarian consequences of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan* to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons for report.

2.12. Joint Committee (by video conference, 23 October 2020)

On 12 October, the Bureau prepared the meeting of the Joint Committee.

2.13. Forthcoming meetings of the Assembly until the end of 2020

On 12 October, the Bureau took note of the calendar of meetings.

2.14. Standing Committee meeting (by videoconference, 20 November and 4 December 2020)

On 19 November, the Bureau took note of the revised draft agenda and decided to recommend to the Standing Committee to hold a current affairs debate on *The Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers' Presidency on "Effectively responding to a public health crisis in full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law"* and appointed Mr Jacques Maire (France, ALDE) as the first speaker in the debate.

On 9 December, the Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretary General of the Assembly on the follow-up to both Standing Committee meetings.

2.15. First part-session of 2021 (Strasbourg, 25-29 January)

On 19 November, the Bureau was informed of the state of preparation of the first part-session of 2021, held an exchange of views and took note of the options of draft agendas (physical part-session or remote/hybrid part-session) as presented by the Secretary General of the Assembly.

On 9 December, the Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretary General of the Assembly, adopted the draft agenda of the 1st part-session of 2021, agreed to hold this part-session in a hybrid manner and decided that the elections of personalities during this part-session shall be held by individual electronic voting.

2.16. Communications

On 31 January, on 5 March, on 30 April, on 25 June, on 14 September, on 12 October, on 19 November and on 9 December, the Bureau took note of the communications by the President, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

2.17. Election observations

2.17.1. Azerbaïdjan: élections législatives anticipées (9 février 2020)

On 31 January, the Bureau approved the updated list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections (Appendix 1). On 5 March, it approved the report of the ad hoc committee.

2.17.2. Armenia: constitutional referendum (initially foreseen on 5 April 2020)

On 5 March, the Bureau decided to observe this referendum and constituted an ad hoc committee in the form of an Election Assessment Mission (composed of one member of each political group and the two co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee), appointed Mr Andrej Hunko (Germany, UEL) as its Chairperson and left it to the President of the Assembly to approve the list of members. The Constitutional referendum, which had first been postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is no longer scheduled.

2.17.3. North Macedonia: parliamentary elections (12 April 2020; 15 July 2020)

On 31 January, the Bureau approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections and appointed Lord Blencathra (United Kingdom, EC/DA) as its Chairperson.

On 5 March, the Bureau approved the final list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections, which was updated on 25 June.

On 14 September, the Bureau took note of the cancellation of the observation of these elections.

2.17.4. Serbia: parliamentary elections (24 June, initially foreseen on 26 April 2020)

On 31 January, the Bureau approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections and appointed Mr Aleksander Pociej (Poland, EPP/CD) as its Chairperson.

On 5 March, the Bureau approved the final list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections.

On 25 June, the Bureau took note of the cancellation of the observation of these elections.

2.17.5. Poland: presidential election (10 May 2020; 28 June 2020)

On 5 March, the Bureau approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe this election and appointed Mr Stefan Schennach (Austria, SOC) as its Chairperson.

On 25 June, the Bureau approved the updated list of members of the ad hoc committee to assess this election (Appendix 2).

On 14 September, the Bureau took note of the memorandum submitted by the Chairperson of the Election Assessment Mission.

2.17.6. Montenegro: parliamentary elections (30 August 2020)

On 25 June, the Bureau decided to observe these elections and constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 20 members (EPP/CD: 6, SOC: 6, ALDE: 4, EC/DA: 3, UEL: 1), as well as of the co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee; to conduct a pre-electoral mission, and to authorise the President of the Assembly to appoint the Chairperson of the ad hoc committee.

On 14 September, the Bureau took note of the cancellation of the observation of these elections.

2.17.7. Georgia: parliamentary elections (31 October 2020)

On 25 June, the Bureau decided to observe these elections and constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 30 members (EPP/CD: 10, SOC: 9, ALDE: 5, EC/DA: 4, UEL: 2), as well as of the co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee; to conduct a pre-electoral mission, and to authorise the President of the Assembly to appoint the Chairperson of the ad hoc committee.

On 14 September, the Bureau approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections and appointed Mr Tiny Kox (Netherlands, UEL) as its Chairperson. On 12 October, the Bureau approved the final list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections (Appendix 3).

On 19 November, the Bureau took note of the press release by the ad hoc committee to observe these elections, authorised a post-electoral mission and agreed to update the list of members of the ad hoc committee at its next meeting. On 9 December, it confirmed its decision to authorise a post-electoral mission and approved the list of members of the post-electoral delegation[1]. Due to the sanitary situation, the post-electoral mission was cancelled.

1. Chairperson: Tiny KOX, Netherlands, UEL; EPP/CD: Mr Aleksander POCIEJ, Poland; SOC: Ms Petra BAYR, Austria, Ms Jette CHRISTENSEN, Norway; ALDE: Mr Jacques MAIRE, France; EC/DA: Mr Ulrich OEHME, Germany; UEL: Mr Georgios KATROUGKALOS, Greece.

2.17.8. Republic of Moldova: presidential election (1st November 2020)

On 25 June, the Bureau decided to observe this election and constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 20 members (EPP/CD: 6, SOC: 6, ALDE: 4, EC/DA: 3, UEL: 1), as well as of the co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee; to conduct a pre-electoral mission, and to authorise the President of the Assembly to appoint the Chairperson of the ad hoc committee.

On 14 September, the Bureau approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe this election and appointed Mr Joseph O'Reilly (Ireland, EPP/CD) as its Chairperson.

On 12 October, the Bureau approved the final list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe this election (Appendix 4).

On 19 November, the Bureau took note of the cancellation of the observation mission of this election.

2.17.9. Jordan parliamentary elections (10 November 2020)

On 14 September, the Bureau decided to observe these elections and constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 11 members (EPP/CD: 3; SOC: 3; ALDE: 2; EC/DA: 2; UEL: 1).

On 12 October, the Bureau approved the list of members of the ad hoc committee to observe these elections (Appendix 5) and appointed Mr Aleksander Pociej (Poland, EPP/CD) as Chairperson of the ad hoc committee.

On 19 November, the Bureau took note of the cancellation of the observation mission of these elections.

2.17.10. Kazakhstan: parliamentary elections (10 January 2021)

On 19 November, the Bureau decided not to observe these elections.

2.17.11. Kyrgyzstan: presidential election (10 January 2021)

On 9 December, the Bureau decided to observe this election, subject to the sanitary conditions, constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 5 members (one representative of each political group) and authorised the President to approve the list of members and to appoint the Chairperson of the ad hoc committee. Due to the sanitary situation, the observation mission was cancelled.

2.17.12. Bulgaria: parliamentary elections (28 March 2021)

On 9 December, the Bureau decided to observe these elections and constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 20 members (EPP/CD: 6, SOC: 6, ALDE: 4, EC/DA: 3, UEL: 1) as well as of the co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee; and to conduct a pre-electoral mission.

2.17.13. Schedule of elections for 2020

On 31 January and on 30 April, the Bureau took note of the updated calendar of elections to be observed by the Assembly in 2020.

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

On 19 November, the Bureau interviewed Mr Bjørn Berge (Norway) and Ms Leyla Kayacik (Turkey), candidates for the post of Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe (*in camera*).

2.19. Election of the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly

On 31 January, the Bureau considered and approved the proposals contained in the memorandum prepared by the Secretariat of the Assembly.

On 14 September, the Bureau decided to prolong the mandate of the current Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly until the end of February 2021, subject to agreement with the Committee of Ministers to be reached within the Joint Committee.

On 9 December, the Bureau interviewed Ms Despina Chatzivassiliou-Tsovilis (Greece) and Mr Wojciech Sawicki (Poland), candidates for the post of Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly *(in camera).*

2.20. European Union accession to the European Convention on Human Rights

On 31 January, the Bureau took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly and invited its President to contact the President of the European Parliament with a view to resuming the joint work in this respect.

2.21. Honorary President

On 31 January, the Bureau decided to grant the title of Honorary President to Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier, President of the Assembly 2018-2020.

2.22. Assessment of the conformity of the decision-making processes developed by committees with the Assembly's Rules of Procedure

On 5 March, the Bureau took note of the Opinion by the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs.

2.23. Participation of members in Parliamentary Assembly plenary sessions and committee meetings

On 5 March, the Bureau approved the proposals contained in paragraph 51 of the information memorandum on the participation of members in Parliamentary Assembly plenary sessions and committee meetings in accordance with Resolution 1583 (2007) and decided:

– to invite the President of the Assembly to notify in writing the chairpersons of the delegations and the speakers of the parliaments concerned by low participation rates (Rule 44.10 of the Rules of Procedure and paragraph 7.2 of Resolution 1583 (2007)) and to arrange a meeting with the chairpersons of the relevant delegations;

– to make publicly available the statistics relating to the participation of national delegations on the Assembly's website.

2.24. Meetings of the Standing Committee and the Bureau in 2021

On 14 September, the Bureau approved the proposals contained in the Appendix 6.

2.25. Issues raised by committees

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

On 31 January, the Bureau authorised Ms Thorhildur Sunna Ævarsdottir (Iceland, SOC) to carry out a fact-finding visit to the Canadian Parliament in the spring of 2020, in the framework of the preparation of her report on "*Revision of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Parliamentary Assembly in accordance with §13.2 of Resolution 2274 (2019) on Promoting parliaments free of sexism and sexual harassment".*

2.25.2. Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development

On 31 January, the Bureau authorised Baroness Doreen E. Massey (United Kingdom, SOC) to participate in the *Safe Sport International Conference*, in Quebec City (Canada), on 15-17 April 2020, in the framework of the preparation of her report on *"Addressing sexual violence against children: stepping up action and co-operation in Europe".*

2.25.3. Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons

On 14 September, the Bureau took note of the request by the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons to set up an ad hoc sub-committee of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons to visit Moria camps and, subject to receiving an invitation by the Greek authorities and to sanitary conditions, authorised this ad hoc sub-committee to meet in Moria (Greece) at dates to be determined.

2.26. 2020 Václav Havel Human Rights Prize

On 31 January, the Bureau took note of the press release of the launch of the 2020 edition of the Prize.

On 30 April, the Bureau took note of the prolongation of the deadline to submit candidatures to the 2020 edition of the Václav Havel Human Rights Prize, until 30 June 2020.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the related sanitary situation in Europe, the procedure leading to the selection of the Laureat of the Prize has been postponed.

On 9 December, the Bureau took note of the state of play of the 2020 edition of the Prize.

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

On 31 January, the Bureau approved the lists of candidates in respect of Romania and of the Slovak Republic, to be forwarded to the Committee of Ministers and approved the recommendation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to invite the delegations of Poland and of the Russian Federation to submit a new list of candidates to the CPT.

On 19 November, the Bureau approved the list of candidates in respect of Germany, Italy and the Russian Federation and decided to forward it to the Committee of Ministers and approved the recommendation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to invite the delegation of Cyprus to submit a new list of candidates to the CPT.

2.28. Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2020

On 31 January, the Bureau approved the designations as set up in Appendix 7.

On 5 March, the Bureau appointed Sir Roger Gale (United Kingdom, EC/DA) as representative of the Assembly to the Venice Commission.

2.29. Budgetary matters

2.29.1. Analysis of the use made by the Assembly's political groups of their allocations for 2019

On 25 June, the Bureau took note of the letter by the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, and approved the communication submitted by the committee.

2.29.2. Expenditure of the Parliamentary Assembly for the 2021 financial year

On 9 December, the Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretary General of the Assembly.

2.29.3. Apportionment of the allocation to political groups for 2021

On 9 December, the Bureau approved the proposal for the apportionment of the allocation.

2.30. 2020 World Forum for Democracy (Strasbourg, 16-18 November)

On 25 June, the Bureau took note of the concept paper and decided to set up an ad hoc committee of the Bureau to participate in the Forum.

2.31. Parliamentary co-operation activities: work plan 2021

On 9 December, the Bureau took note of the information provided by the Secretary General of the Assembly.

3. Decisions taken by the Bureau at its meetings in 2020 and subsequently ratified by the Assembly or the Standing Committee

3.1. Bureau meeting on 31 January

Decisions taken by the Bureau at its meeting on 31 January 2020 which were subsequently ratified by the Assembly on 31 January can be found in Doc 15036 Add. 3 (see Appendix 8).

On 31 January, the Bureau approved the following extensions of references which were subsequently ratified by the Assembly on the same day:

– Doc. 14262, Motion for a resolution, *Russian racial discrimination of Crimean Tatars in Crimea*: extension until 31 December 2020;

– Doc. 14382, Motion for a resolution, *The continuing need to restore human rights and the rule of law in the North Caucasus region*: extension until 30 September 2020;

– Doc. 14476, Motion for a resolution, *Strengthening parliamentary dialogue with Algeria*: extension until 15 December 2020.

On 5 March, the Bureau approved the following extensions of references:

– Doc. 14489, Motion for a resolution, *The treatment of people with autism and their families* (Reference 4374 of 27 April 2018) – validity: 27 April 2020: extension until 30 June 2020;

– Doc. 14494, Motion for a resolution, *Strengthening the role of young people in the prevention and resolution of conflicts* (Reference 4377 of 27 April 2018 – validity: 27 April 2020): extension until 31 October 2020.

3.2. Bureau meeting on 5 March

On 5 March, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee the following day:

– Doc. 15040, Motion for a resolution, *Media freedom, public trust and the people's right to know*: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report;*

– Doc. 15041, Motion for a resolution, *The control of online communication: a threat to media pluralism, freedom of information and human dignity*: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report;*

– Doc. 15045, Motion for a resolution, *Justice and security for women in peace reconciliation*: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report* and to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for opinion;*

– Doc. 15046, Motion for a resolution, *Follow-up to the humanitarian consequences of the war in Ukraine*: transmission to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for information*;

– Doc. 15047, Motion for a resolution, *Relationship between the parliamentary majority and the opposition in a democracy*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Doc. 15048, Motion for a resolution, *More participatory democracy to tackle climate change*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Doc. 15049, Motion for a resolution, *Political prisoners in the Russian Federation*: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report;*

– Doc. 15052, Motion for a resolution, *Condemnation of antisemitism and of the goals of the BDS-Movement:* no further action;

– Doc. 15053, Motion for a resolution, *Exploiting children in rural sectors of coffee and cocoa*: no further action;

– Bureau Decision, *Modification to the Rules of Procedure*: reference to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, *for report.*

3.3. Bureau meeting on 7 May

On 7 May, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee the same day:

– Doc. 15066, Motion for a resolution, Widespread recurring violence against security, fire and medical services on New Year's Eve: how to restore trust and the rule of law: no further action;

– Doc. 15067, Motion for a resolution, *Enhancing participation of women from vulnerable groups in political and public decision-making*: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report;*

– Doc. 15069, Motion for a resolution, *Gender mainstreaming of migration policies*: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*;

– Doc. 15070, Motion for a resolution, *Employment of disabled people in Europe*: no further action;

– Doc. 15071, Motion for a resolution, *Prevention of abuse of mutual legal co-operation with respect to refugees and asylum seekers*: transmission to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for information;*

– Doc. 15072, Motion for a resolution, Re-establishing sustainable living conditions for autochthonous communities in balance with their natural environments in member States: no further action;

– Doc. 15073, Motion for a resolution, The Parliamentary Assembly's role in developing a systematic approach to cope with global epidemic outbreaks: no further action;

– Doc. 15074, Motion for a resolution, *Impact of armed conflicts on transboundary environmental damage*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report;*

– Doc. 15077, Motion for a resolution, *For an assessment of the means and provisions to combat children's exposure to pornographic content*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report* and to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for opinion;*

– Doc. 15078, Motion for a resolution, *Food ethics in Europe: a citizen's issue that concerns all of us*: no further action;

– Doc. 15079, Motion for a resolution, *Introducing sustainable management practices in forests of the continental biogeographical region*: transmission to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for information;*

– Doc. 15080, Motion for a resolution, *How to move forward to make businesses more responsible for human rights abuses?*: transmission to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for information;*

– Doc. 15081, Motion for a resolution, *The crackdown on human rights defenders and NGOs in the field of refugee rescue, support and integration*: no further action;

– Doc. 15082, Motion for a resolution, *Voluntary relocation for migrants in need of humanitarian protection*: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report;*

– Doc. 15094, Motion for a resolution, *COVID-19 – an effective and human rights-compliant response*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report* with the title: "Lessons for future public health emergencies from an effective and rights-based response to the COVID-19 pandemic";

– Bureau decision: *Democracies facing the COVID-19 pandemic*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Bureau decision: *Women's rights must withstand the COVID-19 crisis*: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report;*

– Bureau decision: *The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on human rights and the rule of law*: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report* and to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for opinion;*

– Bureau decision: *Humanitarian consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for migrants and refugees*: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report;*

3.4. Bureau meeting on 25 June

On 25 June, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee the following day:

– Doc. 15068, Motion for a resolution, *Artificial intelligence and climate change* and Doc. 15108, Motion for a resolution, *Anchoring the right to a healthy environment: need for enhanced action by the Council of Europe*: reference of both motions to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for a single report*;

– Doc. 15106, Motion for a resolution, *Deinstitutionalisation of persons with disabilities*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report* and to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for opinion;*

– Doc. 15107, Motion for a resolution, *Eradicating extreme child poverty in Europe: an international obligation and a moral duty*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report*;

– Doc. 15111, Motion for a resolution, *Safe third countries for asylum seekers*: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*;

– Doc. 15112, Motion for a resolution, *Alternative care for unaccompanied and separated migrant children*: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report* and to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for opinion;*

– Doc. 15113, Motion for a resolution, *Climate and migration*: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*;

– Bureau decision, *Democracies facing the COVID-19 pandemic*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report* and to the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee) *for opinion.*

3.5. Bureau meeting on 14 September

On 14 september, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee the following day:

– Doc. 15118, Motion for a recommendation, *Creation of a reserve fund out of unused funds of the Parliamentary Assembly*: transmission to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs *for information;*

– Doc. 15119, Motion for a resolution, *The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education and culture*: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report;*

– Doc. 15121, Motion for a resolution, *Combatting rising hate against LGBTI people in Europe*: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report;*

– Doc. 15125, Motion for a resolution, *Impact of COVID-19 on children's rights*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report;*

– Doc. 15126, Motion for a resolution, *Air quality strategy to reduce the spread of coronavirus*: transmission to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for information;*

– Doc. 15130, Motion for a resolution, *Call for an inclusive national political process in Belarus*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Doc. 15131, Motion for a resolution, *Urgent need for electoral reform in Belarus*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Doc. 15135, Motion for a resolution, *Human rights violations in Belarus require an international investigation*: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report;*

– Bureau decision, Addressing issues of criminal and civil liability in the context of climate change: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for report;

– Bureau decision, *Addressing inequalities in access to environmental rights*: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report;*

– Bureau decision, *Research policies and environment protection*: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report.*

3.6. Bureau meeting on 12 October

On 12 October, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee the same day:

– Doc. 15137, Motion for a resolution, *Fighting and preventing excessive and unjustified use of force by the law enforcement officers*: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report;*

– Doc. 15140, Motion for a resolution, *The role of the media in times of crisis*: reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report;*

– Doc. 15144, Motion for a resolution, *Safeguarding democratic values in international trade*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report;*

– Doc. 15145, Motion for a resolution, *Overcoming the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report;*

– Doc. 15146, Motion for a resolution, *Towards a Covid-19 vaccine: ethical, legal and practical considerations*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report;*

– Doc. 15155, Motion for a resolution, *Poisoning of Alexei Navalny*: reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report;*

– Doc. 15160, Motion for a resolution, *Safeguarding peace and stability in the East Mediterranean Sea:* reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Doc. 15162, Motion for a resolution, *The impact of Brexit on human rights on the island of Ireland*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Doc. 14802, Motion for a resolution, *Should politicians be prosecuted for statements made in the exercise of their mandate?* (Reference 4428 of 1 March 2019 – validity: 1 September 2021): reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report* and to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for opinion.*

3.7. Bureau meeting on 19 November

On 19 November, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions which were subsequently ratified by the Standing Committee the same day:

– Doc. 15165, Motion for a resolution, *Track and trace applications: ethical, cultural and educational challenges*: transmission to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for opinion;*

– Doc. 15168, Motion for a resolution, *Combating antisemitism in Europe*: transmission to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*;

– Doc. 15169, Motion for a resolution, *Raising awareness of and countering Islamophobia in Europe*: transmission to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*;

– Doc. 15170, Motion for a resolution, *Closing the digital divide: promoting equal access to digital technologies*: transmission to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for report*;

– Doc. 15175, Motion for a resolution, Which measures can States legally take under the European Convention on Human Rights in order to crack down on Islamic extremism? no further action;

– Doc. 15176, Motion for a resolution, *Protecting the pillars of democracy during health crises:* transmission to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report;*

– Doc. 15180, Motion for a resolution, *Pushbacks on land and sea: illegal measures of migration management:* transmission to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report;*

– Doc. 15181, Motion for a resolution, *European Union Pact on Migration and Asylum: a human rights perspective:* transmission to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report;*

– Bureau decision, *Humanitarian consequences of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan*: reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report*.

3.8. Composition of the Monitoring Committee, the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, and the Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights

3.8.1. Monitoring Committee:

On 5 March, on the basis of a proposal by the EC/DA Group, the bureau appointed Mr Zbigniew Rau (Poland).

On 7 May, on the basis of a proposal by the SOC Group, the Bureau appointed Ms Jette Christensen (Norway).

On 25 June, the Bureau:

– on the basis of a proposal by the EPP/CD Group, appointed Mr Birgir Thórarinsson (Iceland) as member;

– on the basis of a proposal by the EC/DA Group, appointed Mr Richard Bacon (United Kingdom), Mr Iván Espinosa De Los Monteros (Spain), and Mr Samad Seyidov (Azerbaijan), as members;

– on the basis of a proposal by the ALDE Group, appointed Mr Damien Cottier (Switzerland) as member.

On 12 October, on the basis of a proposal by the EPP/CD Group, the Bureau appointed Ms Milena Damyanova (Bulgaria) as member.

3.8.2. Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs:

On 5 March, the Bureau appointed Mr Sergey Kislyak as non registered member (Russian Federation, NR).

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

On 25 June, on the basis of a proposal by the SOC Group, the Bureau appointed Mr Irakli Kobakhidze (Georgia) as member.

On 19 November, on the basis of a proposal by the EC/DA Group, the Bureau appointed Mr. Arkadiusz Mularczyk (Poland).

3.9. Dates of Assembly part-sessions (2023-2025)

On 12 October, the Bureau approved the revised memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly (Appendix 9), subject to ratification by the Standing Committee.

4. Decisions taken by the Bureau at its meeting on 9 December requiring ratification by the Assembly on Monday 25 January through the Progress report

On 9 December, the Bureau approved the following references and transmissions subject to ratification by the Assembly:

– Doc. 15184, Motion for a resolution, *Review of the partnership for democracy in respect of the Parliament of the Kyrgyz Republic:* reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report* and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for opinion;*

– Doc. 15189, Motion for a resolution, *Sports policies in times of crisis:* reference to the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media *for report.*

On 9 December, the Bureau decided on the following modification of a reference:

– Doc. 15069, Motion for a resolution, *Gender mainstreaming of migration policies:* reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons *for report* and to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for opinion.*

5. Activities of the Standing Committee

5.1. Paris, 6 March 2020

The Standing Committee:

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Germany, Poland and Spain;

– approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;

– took note of the draft agenda of the second part-session of the Assembly (20-24 April 2020);

– ratified the references proposed by the Bureau;

– held a current affairs debate on “Recent developments at the Turkish-Greek-Bulgarian borders: how to safeguard human rights?”;

– adopted the following text on behalf of the Assembly: Resolution 2328 (2020), Prevention of violence and discrimination against religious minorities amongst refugees in Europe

– held an exchange of views on the functioning and the future of the Council of Europe and its Parliamentary Assembly;

– decided to hold its next meeting in Athens on 29 May 2020.

5.2. Videoconference, 30 April 2020

The Standing Committee:

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Azerbaijan, Germany and Norway;

– approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;

– approved the minutes of the meeting of the Standing Committee held in Paris on 6 March 2020;

– took note of the decision of the Bureau of the Assembly to postpone the summer part-session of the Assembly, scheduled to be held in Strasbourg on 22-26 June 2020, to a later date, before the October part-session;

– held a current affairs debate on “Response of the Council of Europe member States to the COVID-19 pandemic with respect to human rights, democracy and the rule of law”;

– decided to hold its next meeting on 7 May 2020 by videoconference.

5.3. Videoconference, 7 May 2020

The Standing Committee:

– approved a change in the composition of an Assembly committee;

– ratified the references proposed by the Bureau;

– decided to hold its next meeting on 26 June 2020 by videoconference.

5.4. Videoconference, 26 June 2020

The Standing Committee:

– held an exchange of views with Mr Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Estonia, Germany, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and the United Kingdom;

– approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;

– approved the minutes of the Standing Committee meetings held on 30 April and 7 May 2020;

– ratified the references proposed by the Bureau;

– took note of the report of the Ad hoc Committee of the Bureau on the observation of the early parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan (9 February 2020);

– held an exchange of views with Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization;

– within the framework of the debate on “Addressing sexual violence against children: stepping up action and co-operation in Europe”, heard an intervention by Ms Najat Maalla M’jid, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on Violence against Children;

– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

  - Recommendation 2174 (2020), Lessons for the future from an effective and rights-based response to the COVID-19 pandemic;

- Resolution 2329 (2020), Lessons for the future from an effective and rights-based response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Recommendation 2175 (2020), Addressing sexual violence against children: stepping up action and co-operation in Europe;
- Resolution 2330 (2020), Addressing sexual violence against children: stepping up action and co-operation in Europe;
- Resolution 2331 (2020), Empowering women: promoting access to contraception in Europe;

– decided to hold its next meeting in Chania (Crete, Greece) on 15 and 16 September 2020.

5.5. Videoconference, 15 September 2020

The Standing Committee:

– held an exchange of views with Mr Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Bulgaria, Croatia, Ireland, the Russian Federation, Slovenia, Switzerland and Turkey;

– approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;

– approved the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 26 June 2020;

– took note of the Bureau's decision to replace the fourth part-session of the Parliamentary Assembly (12-16 October 2020) by an enlarged Standing Committee meeting to be held in two parts on 12-13 and 22-23 October 2020;

– ratified the references proposed by the Bureau;

– held a current affairs debate on "Events and current situation in Belarus";

– adopted a declaration on the events and current situation in Belarus (Appendix 10);

– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

- Resolution 2332 (2020), Setting minimum standards for electoral systems in order to offer the basis for free and fair elections;
- Resolution 2333 (2020), Ethics in science and technology: a new culture of public dialogue;
- Resolution 2334 (2020), Towards an Internet Ombudsman institution;
- Recommendation 2176 (2020), Ethics in science and technology: a new culture of public dialogue;

– decided to hold its next meeting by videoconference on 12-13 and 22-23 October 2020.

5.6. Videoconference, 12-13 October 2020 and 22-23 October 2020

The Standing Committee:

Monday 12 October 2020

– held an exchange of views with Mr Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;

– held an exchange of views with Mr Angel Gurría, Secretary-General of the OECD;

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Croatia and Spain;

– approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;

– approved the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 15 September 2020;

– ratified the dates of Assembly part-sessions (2023-2025) as proposed by the Bureau (see Appendix 9);

– ratified the references proposed by the Bureau;

– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:
  - Recommendation 2177 (2020), Drug policy and human rights in Europe: a baseline study;
  - Resolution 2335 (2020), Drug policy and human rights in Europe: a baseline study;
  - Recommendation 2178 (2020), Time to act: Europe's political response to fighting the manipulation of sports competitions;
  - Resolution 2336 (2020), Time to act: Europe's political response to fighting the manipulation of sports competitions;
– held a current affairs debate on "Armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, failure of peaceful conflict resolution and a risk to regional stability";

Tuesday 13 October 2020

– held an exchange of views with Ms Dunja Mijatović, Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights on her 2019 annual activity report;
– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:
  - Recommendation 2179 (2020), Democracies facing the Covid-19 pandemic;
  - Resolution 2337 (2020), Democracies facing the Covid-19 pandemic;
  - Recommendation 2180 (2020), The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on human rights and the rule of law;
  - Resolution 2338 (2020), The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on human rights and the rule of law;
  - Resolution 2339 (2020), Upholding human rights in times of crisis and pandemics: gender, equality and non-discrimination;
  - Resolution 2340 (2020), Humanitarian consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic for migrants and refugees;

Thursday 22 October 2020

– held an exchange of views with Mr Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;
– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:
  - Recommendation 2181 (2020), Need for democratic governance of artificial intelligence;
  - Resolution 2341 (2020), Need for democratic governance of artificial intelligence;
  - Recommendation 2182 (2020), Justice by algorithm – the role of artificial intelligence in policing and criminal justice systems;
  - Resolution 2342 (2020), Justice by algorithm – the role of artificial intelligence in policing and criminal justice systems;
  - Recommendation 2183 (2020), Preventing discrimination caused by the use of artificial intelligence;
  - Resolution 2343 (2020), Preventing discrimination caused by the use of artificial intelligence;
  - Recommendation 2184 (2020), The brain-computer interface: new rights or new threats to fundamental freedoms?;
  - Resolution 2344 (2020), The brain-computer interface: new rights or new threats to fundamental freedoms?;
  - Recommendation 2185 (2020), Artificial intelligence in health care: medical, legal and ethical challenges ahead;
  - Recommendation 2186 (2020), Artificial intelligence and labour markets: friend or foe?;
  - Resolution 2345 (2020), Artificial intelligence and labour markets: friend or foe?;

- Recommendation 2187 (2020), Legal aspects of “autonomous” vehicles;
- Resolution 2346 (2020), Legal aspects of “autonomous” vehicles;

Friday 23 October 2020

– held a debate under urgent procedure on “New crackdown on political opposition and civil dissent in Turkey: urgent need to safeguard Council of Europe standards”;

– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

- Resolution 2347 (2020), New crackdown on political opposition and civil dissent in Turkey: urgent need to safeguard Council of Europe standards;
- Recommendation 2188 (2020), The principles and guarantees of advocates;
- Resolution 2348 (2020), The principles and guarantees of advocates;

– decided to hold its next meeting by videoconference on 20 November 2020.

5.7. Videoconference, 20 November 2020

The Standing Committee:

– held an exchange of views with Mr Michael Roth, Minister of State for Europe at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany, Special Representative of the Federal Government for the German Presidency of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe;

– held an exchange of views with Mr Robert Spano, President of the European Court of Human Rights;

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Belgium, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Latvia and the Netherlands;

– approved changes in the composition of Assembly committees;

– approved the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 12, 13, 22 and 23 October 2020;

– ratified the references proposed by the Bureau;

– held a current affairs debate on “The Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship on: “Effectively responding to a public health crisis in full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law””;

– adopted a declaration on the parliamentary contribution to the Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship on: “Effectively responding to a public health crisis in full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law” (Appendix 11);

– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

- Resolution 2349 (2020), Modification of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure on alternative arrangements for the organisation of Parliamentary Assembly part-sessions;
- Resolution 2350 (2020), Modification of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure;
- Resolution 2351 (2020), The gender dimension of foreign policy;
- Resolution 2352 (2020), Threats to academic freedom and autonomy of higher education institutions in Europe;
- Recommendation 2189 (2020), Threats to academic freedom and autonomy of higher education institutions in Europe;

– decided to hold its next meeting by videoconference at a date to be determined.[2]

2. In the meantime, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly decided to convene the Standing Committee on 4 December 2020.

5.8. Videoconference, 4 December 2020

The Standing Committee:

– ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Denmark and Poland;

– approved a change in the composition of an Assembly committee;

– approved the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 20 November 2020;

– adopted the following texts on behalf of the Assembly:

- Resolution 2353 (2020), Supporting people with autism and their families;
- Recommendation 2190 (2020), Effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated migrant children;
- Resolution 2354 (2020), Effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated migrant children;
- Recommendation 2191 (2020), Investment migration;
- Resolution 2355 (2020), Investment migration;
- Recommendation 2192 (2020), Rights and obligations of NGOs assisting refugees and migrants in Europe;
- Resolution 2356 (2020), Rights and obligations of NGOs assisting refugees and migrants in Europe;

– decided to hold its next meeting on 19 March 2021 (venue to be confirmed).

6. Gender equality in the functioning of the Assembly[3]

1. Since 2012, following a Bureau decision, statistics on the gender breakdown of Assembly positions are prepared every year and included in the Progress report on the activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee presented during the January part-session. They provide a picture of the situation as of December of any given year. The publication of this information aims at enhancing transparency and raising awareness.

2. In 2020, the total number of women members of the Assembly represented 37%, compared to 34% in 2019, bringing the proportion back to that of 2018. According to data collected by the Inter-parliamentary Union,[4] the total share of women members of parliament in the Council of Europe member States increased slightly over the last year, from 29% in December 2019 to 30% in October 2020. This appears to demonstrate that the provisions laid down in Rule 6.2 a. of the Assembly's Rules of procedure, namely that '*national delegations should include members of the under-represented sex at least in the same percentage as in their national parliaments*' have had a positive impact, since in many cases the national delegations to the Assembly have a higher representation rate of women than national parliaments.

3. In 2020, the Assembly's presidency was held by a man, Mr Rik Daems, who succeeded to Ms Liliane Maury Pasquier (three of the last ten Assembly presidents have been women). The percentage of women as Vice-Presidents of the Assembly dropped substantially from 41% to 25%, and that of women Bureau members decreased even further, from 42% to 23%. This reflects the decrease in the number of women as Chairpersons of committees (3 out of 9 compared to 4 out of 9 in 2019). There were no women members of the Presidential Committee in 2020.

4. As regards the composition of committees, an overall of 36 % of full members in 2020 were women, up from 34% in 2019. Women alternates counted for 37%, a one-point increase compared to 2019. Women represented over a third of full members in only two committees: Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development (45%) and Committee on Equality and Non-discrimination (65%), up respectively from 43% and 51% in 2019. Three committees counted 30% of women as full members (Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights and Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media). The percentage of women full members stood at

3. The figures provided represent the situation on 1 December 2020. The figures concerning rapporteurs refer to the debates that were held in 2020.
4. https://data.ipu.org/women-averages.

33% for the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, at 32% for the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, at 29% for the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons and at 19% for the Monitoring Committee.

5. On average, the representation of women as rapporteurs for report decreased significantly from 36% in 2019 to 30% in 2020. It also remains very low in some committees and there were no women rapporteurs at all in the Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media in 2020. The representation of women as Rapporteurs for opinion decreased overall from 46% in the previous year to 30% in 2020. The representation of rapporteurs for opinion is very unbalanced moving from 100% women to 0% from one year to the other and the other way around – this is mainly because the number of opinions is very variable from one year to another.

OVERVIEW ASSEMBLY							
Position	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Percentage of men**		**Percentage of women**	
				2019	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
President	1	0	1	0%	100%	100%	0%
Vice-Presidents	12	4	16	59%	75%	41%	25%
Presidential Committee	6	0	6	86%	100%	14%	0%
Assembly Bureau	27	8	35	58%	77%	42%	23%

COMMITTEES	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Percentage of men**		**Percentage of women**	
				2019	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy							
Full Members	57	25	82	70%	70%	30%	30%
Alternates	64	13	77	78%	83%	22%	17%
Chairperson	0	1	1	0%	0%	100%	100%
Vice-Chairpersons	3	0	3	100%	100%	0%	0%
Rapporteurs for report	4	1	5	63%	80%	37%	20%
Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights							
Full Members	55	27	82	70%	67%	30%	33%
Alternates	56	24	80	68%	70%	32%	30%
Chairperson	1	0	1	0%	100%	100%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons	3	0	3	100%	100%	0%	0%
Rapporteurs for report	6	2	8	92%	75%	8%	25%
Rapporteurs for opinion	2	1	3	100%	67%	0%	33%
Committee on the Election of Judges to the European Court of Human Rights							
Full Members	14	6	20	71%	70%	29%	30%
Alternates	11	1	12	81%	92%	19%	8%
Chairperson	1	0	1	100%	100%	0%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons	1	2	3	100%	33%	0%	67%
Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development							
Full Members	44	36	80	57%	55%	43%	45%
Alternates	42	33	75	57%	56%	43%	44%
Chairperson	1	0	1	100%	100%	0%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons	1	2	3	67%	33%	33%	67%
Rapporteurs for report	5	4	9	33%	56%	67%	44%
Rapporteurs for opinion	2	1	3	0%	67%	100%	33%
Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons							
Full Members	60	24	84	69%	71%	31%	29%
Alternates	50	29	79	67%	63%	33%	37%
Chairperson	1	0	1	0%	100%	100%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons	1	1	2	67%	50%	33%	50%
Rapporteurs for report	5	2	7	43%	71%	57%	29%
Rapporteurs for opinion	1	0	1	-	100%	-	0%
Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media							
Full Members	57	24	81	64%	70%	36%	30%
Alternates	42	35	77	70%	55%	30%	45%
Chairperson	1	0	1	100%	100%	0%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons	2	1	3	50%	67%	50%	33%
Rapporteurs for report	5	0	5	80%	100%	20%	0%
Rapporteurs for opinion	1	0	1	100%	100%	0%	0%
Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination							

COMMITTEES	Men	Women	Total	Percentage of men		Percentage of women	
				2019	2020	2019	2020
Full Members	29	54	83	49%	35%	51%	65%
Alternates	37	40	77	37%	48%	63%	52%
Chairperson	0	1	1	0%	100%	0%	100%
Vice-Chairpersons	0	3	3	67%	0%	33%	100%
Rapporteurs for report	1	3	4	44%	25%	56%	75%
Rapporteurs for opinion	0	1	1	25%	0%	75%	100%
Committee on Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States (Monitoring Committee)							
Members	57	13	70	76%	81%	24%	19%
Chairperson	1	0	1	100%	100%	0%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons	1	2	3	100%	33%	0%	67%
Rapporteurs for report	5	1	6	75%	83%	25%	17%
Rapporteurs for opinion	0	1	1	100%	0%	0%	100%
Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs							
Members	17	8	25	83%	68%	17%	32%
Chairperson	0	1	1	100%	0%	0%	100%
Vice-Chairpersons	3	0	3	33%	100%	67%	0%
Rapporteurs for report	1	1	2	60%	50%	40%	50%
Rapporteurs for opinion	1	0	1	100%	100%	0%	0%

OVERVIEW COMMITTEES							
Position	Men	Women	Total	Percentage of men		Percentage of women	
				2019	2020	2019	2020
Members	390	217	607	66%	64%	34%	36%
Alternates	302	175	477	64%	63%	36%	37%
Committee Chairpersons	6	3	9	56%	67%	44%	33%
Committee Vice-Chairpersons	15	11	26	76%	58%	24%	42%
Rapporteurs for report	32	14	46	64%	70%	36%	30%
Rapporteurs for opinion	7	4	11	54%	64%	46%	36%

GENDER BREAKDOWN, BUREAUX OF SUB-COMMITTEES							
Committees	Men	Women	Total	Percentage of men		Percentage of women	
				2019	2020	2019	2020
Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy							
Sub-Committee Chairpersons	1	1	1	100%	50%	0%	50%
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	0	0	0	100%	-	0%	-
Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights							
Sub-Committee Chairpersons	3	0	3	50%	100%	50%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	0	0	0	67%	-	33%	-
Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development							
Sub-Committee Chairpersons	1	3	4	100%	25%	0%	75%
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	1	0	1	67%	100%	33%	0%
Committee on Migration, Refugees and Displaced Persons							

GENDER BREAKDOWN, BUREAUX OF SUB-COMMITTEES							
Committees	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Percentage of men**		**Percentage of women**	
				2019	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Sub-Committee Chairpersons	2	0	2	100%	100%	0%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	1	1	2	67%	50%	33%	50%
Committee on Culture, Science, Education and Media							
Sub-Committee Chairpersons	1	1	2	0%	50%	100%	50%
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	2	1	3	100%	67%	0%	33%
Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination							
Sub-Committee Chairpersons	0	2	2	67%	0%	33%	100%
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	0	1	1	100%	0%	0%	100%
Committee on Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States (Monitoring Committee)							
Sub-Committee Chairperson	1	0	1	100%	100%	0%	0%
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	0	0	0	0%	-	100%	-
Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs							
Sub-Committee Chairperson	0	0	0	100%	-	0%	-
Vice-Chairpersons of Sub-Committees	0	0	0	-	-	-	-

OVERVIEW – SUB-COMMITTEES							
Position	**Men**	**Women**	**Total**	**Percentage of men**		**Percentage of women**	
				2019	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Sub-Committee Chairpersons	9	7	16	64%	62%	36%	38%
Sub-Committee Vice-Chairpersons	4	3	7	73%	57%	27%	43%

GENDER BREAKDOWN – NATIONAL DELEGATIONS					
National Delegations (Representatives and Substitutes)	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Percentage of men**	**Percentage of women**
Albania	7	2	5	29%	71%
Andorra	4	2	2	50%	50%
Armenia	8	6	2	75%	25%
Austria	12	7	5	58%	42%
Azerbaijan	12	8	4	67%	33%
Belgium	13	7	6	54%	46%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10	4	6	40%	60%
Bulgaria	12	9	3	75%	25%
Croatia	9	4	5	44%	56%
Cyprus	4	3	1	75%	25%
Czech Republic	13	11	2	85%	15%
Denmark	9	6	3	67%	33%
Estonia	6	4	2	67%	33%

GENDER BREAKDOWN – NATIONAL DELEGATIONS					
National Delegations (Representatives and Substitutes)	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Percentage of men**	**Percentage of women**
Finland	9	3	6	33%	67%
France	36	19	17	53%	47%
Georgia	10	8	2	80%	20%
Germany	36	24	12	67%	33%
Greece	14	9	5	64%	36%
Hungary	14	9	5	64%	36%
Iceland	6	3	3	50%	50%
Ireland	7	3	4	43%	57%
Italy	36	25	11	69%	31%
Latvia	5	3	2	60%	40%
Liechtenstein	4	3	1	75%	25%
Lithuania	8	6	2	75%	25%
Luxembourg	6	4	2	67%	33%
Malta	6	5	1	83%	17%
Republic of Moldova	9	6	3	67%	33%
Monaco	4	3	1	75%	25%
Montenegro	5	3	2	60%	40%
Netherlands	11	5	6	45%	55%
North Macedonia	6	4	2	67%	33%
Norway	10	5	5	50%	50%
Poland	23	18	5	78%	22%
Portugal	14	9	5	64%	36%
Romania	19	15	4	79%	21%
Russian Federation	36	27	9	75%	25%
San Marino	4	3	1	75%	25%
Serbia	14	5	9	36%	64%
Slovak Republic	9	5	4	56%	44%
Slovenia	6	0	6	0%	100%
Spain	22	11	11	50%	50%
Sweden	12	7	5	58%	42%
Switzerland	12	9	3	75%	25%
Turkey	36	26	10	72%	28%
Ukraine	24	14	10	58%	42%
United Kingdom	36	26	10	72%	28%
Total	**628**	**398**	**230**	**63%**	**37%**

GENDER BREAKDOWN – NATIONAL DELEGATIONS (REPRESENTATIVES ONLY)					
National Delegations (representatives)	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Percentage of men**	**Percentage of women**
Albania	4	2	2	50%	50%
Andorra	2	1	1	50%	50%
Armenia	4	3	1	75%	25%
Austria	6	4	2	67%	33%
Azerbaijan	6	5	1	83%	17%
Belgium	6	5	1	83%	17%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5	1	4	20%	80%
Bulgaria	6	5	1	83%	17%

GENDER BREAKDOWN – NATIONAL DELEGATIONS (REPRESENTATIVES ONLY)					
National Delegations (representatives)	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Percentage of men**	**Percentage of women**
Croatia	5	2	3	40%	60%
Cyprus	2	1	1	50%	50%
Czech Republic	6	5	1	83%	17%
Denmark	4	3	1	75%	25%
Estonia	3	2	1	67%	33%
Finland	5	2	3	40%	60%
France	18	12	6	67%	33%
Georgia	5	4	1	80%	20%
Germany	18	13	5	72%	28%
Greece	7	4	3	57%	43%
Hungary	7	5	2	71%	29%
Iceland	3	1	2	33%	67%
Ireland	3	2	1	67%	33%
Italy	18	13	5	72%	28%
Latvia	2	1	1	50%	50%
Liechtenstein	2	1	1	50%	50%
Lithuania	4	3	1	75%	25%
Luxembourg	3	2	1	67%	33%
Malta	3	2	1	67%	33%
Republic of Moldova	5	4	1	80%	20%
Monaco	2	1	1	50%	50%
Montenegro	3	2	1	67%	33%
Netherlands	5	2	3	40%	60%
North Macedonia	3	2	1	67%	33%
Norway	5	2	3	40%	60%
Poland	11	10	1	91%	9%
Portugal	7	4	3	57%	43%
Romania	9	7	2	78%	22%
Russian Federation	18	14	4	78%	22%
San Marino	2	1	1	50%	50%
Serbia	7	2	5	29%	71%
Slovak Republic	5	3	2	60%	40%
Slovenia	3	0	3	0%	100%
Spain	10	6	4	60%	40%
Sweden	6	3	3	50%	50%
Switzerland	6	3	3	50%	50%
Turkey	18	13	5	72%	28%
Ukraine	12	5	7	42%	58%
United Kingdom	18	12	6	67%	33%
Total	**312**	**200**	**112**	**64%**	**36%**

GENDER BREAKDOWN – NATIONAL DELEGATIONS (SUBSTITUTES ONLY)					
National Delegations (substitutes)	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Percentage of men**	**Percentage of women**
Albania	3	0	3	0%	100%
Andorra	2	1	1	50%	50%
Armenia	4	3	1	75%	25%
Austria	6	3	3	50%	50%

GENDER BREAKDOWN – NATIONAL DELEGATIONS (SUBSTITUTES ONLY)					
National Delegations (substitutes)	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Percentage of men**	**Percentage of women**
Azerbaijan	6	3	3	50%	50%
Belgium	7	2	5	29%	71%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	5	3	2	60%	40%
Bulgaria	6	4	2	67%	33%
Croatia	4	2	2	50%	50%
Cyprus	2	2	0	100%	0%
Czech Republic	7	6	1	86%	14%
Denmark	5	3	2	60%	40%
Estonia	3	2	1	67%	33%
Finland	4	1	3	25%	75%
France	18	7	11	39%	61%
Georgia	5	4	1	80%	20%
Germany	18	11	7	61%	39%
Greece	7	5	2	71%	29%
Hungary	7	4	3	57%	43%
Iceland	3	2	1	67%	33%
Ireland	4	1	3	25%	75%
Italy	18	12	6	67%	33%
Latvia	3	2	1	67%	33%
Liechtenstein	2	2	0	100%	0%
Lithuania	4	3	1	75%	25%
Luxembourg	3	2	1	67%	33%
Malta	3	3	0	100%	0%
Republic of Moldova	4	2	2	50%	50%
Monaco	2	2	0	100%	0%
Montenegro	2	1	1	50%	50%
Netherlands	6	3	3	50%	50%
North Macedonia	3	2	1	67%	33%
Norway	5	3	2	60%	40%
Poland	12	8	4	67%	33%
Portugal	7	5	2	71%	29%
Romania	10	8	2	80%	20%
Russian Federation	18	13	5	72%	28%
San Marino	2	2	0	100%	0%
Serbia	7	3	4	43%	57%
Slovak Republic	4	2	2	50%	50%
Slovenia	3	0	3	0%	100%
Spain	12	5	7	42%	58%
Sweden	6	4	2	67%	33%
Switzerland	6	6	0	100%	0%
Turkey	18	13	5	72%	28%
Ukraine	12	9	3	75%	25%
United Kingdom	18	14	4	78%	22%
Total	**316**	**198**	**118**	**63%**	**37%**

OVERVIEW – NATIONAL DELEGATIONS							
National Delegations	**Total**	**Men**	**Women**	**Percentage of men**		**Percentage of women**	
				2019	**2020**	**2019**	**2020**
Total	628	398	230	66%	63%	34%	37%
Representatives	312	200	112	64%	64%	36%	36%
Substitutes	316	198	118	67%	63%	33%	37%

Appendix 1 – List of members of the ad hoc committee for the observation of the early parliamentary elections in Azerbaijan (9 February 2020)

Chairperson / Président: Mr / M. Frank SCHWABE, Germany / Allemagne (SOC)

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)

– Mr / M. Viorel Riceard BADEA, Romania / Roumanie
– Ms / M^{me} Alina Ștefania GORGHIU, Romania / Roumanie
– Mr / M. Raivo TAMM, Estonia / Estonie*
– Mr / M. Aleksander POCIEJ, Poland / Pologne
– Mr / M. Jacek PROTASIEWICZ, Poland / Pologne**

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group / Groupe des socialistes, démocrates et verts (SOC)

– Mr / M. Frank SCHWABE, Germany / Allemagne
– Mr / M. Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ, Switzerland / Suisse
– Ms / M^{me} Petra BAYR, Austria / Autriche
– Ms / M^{me} Edite ESTRELA, Portugal
– Ms / M^{me} Thorhildur Sunna ÆVARSDÓTTIR, Iceland / Islande
– Mr / M. Kimmo KILJUNEN, Finland / Finlande
– Mr / M. Roberto RAMPI, Italy / Italie
– Mr / M. Christophe LACROIX, Belgium / Belgique
– Ms / M^{me} Maryvonne BLONDIN, France

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) / Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe (ADLE)

– Mr / M. Alfred HEER, Switzerland / Suisse*
– Mr / M. Bernard CAZEAU, France
– Mr / M. Eerik-Niiles KROSS, Estonia / Estonie
– Mr / M. Jacques LE NAY, France
– Mr / M. Zeki Hakan SIDALI, Turkey / Turquie

European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance (EC/DA) / Groupe des conservateurs européens et Alliance démocratique (CE/AD)

– Mr / M. Ian LIDDELL-GRAINGER, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
– Mr / M. Alberto RIBOLLA, Italy / Italie
– Lord Simon RUSSELL, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni
– Mr / M. Ulrich OEHME, Germany / Allemagne

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) / Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)

– Mr / M. Georgios KATROUGKALOS, Greece / Grèce*
– Mr / M. Sokratis FAMELLOS, Greece / Grèce

Co-Rapporteurs AS/MON (ex officio)

– Mr / M. Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria / Autriche*

Venice Commission / Commission de Venise

– Mr / M. Oliver KASK, member / membre
– Mr Gaël MARTIN-MICALLEF, Legal advisor, Venice Commission / Conseiller juridique, Commission de Venise

Secretariat / Secrétariat – Election Observation and Interparliamentary Co-operation Division

– Mr Bogdan TORCĂTORIU, Administrative Officer,
– Ms Danièle GASTL, Assistant
– Ms Anne GODFREY, Assistant

*Member of the pre-electoral mission

** Awaiting non-conflict of interest declaration

Appendix 2 – List of members of the ad hoc committee for the observation of the presidential election in Poland (28 June 2020)

Chairperson / Président: Mr / M. Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria / Autriche (SOC)

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group / Groupe des socialistes, démocrates et verts (SOC)

– Mr / M. Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria / Autriche
– Ms / M^{me} Yuliya LOVOCHKINA, Ukraine
– Mr / M. Gerardo GIOVAGNOLI, San Marino / Saint-Marin

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)

– Mr / M. Reinhold LOPATKA, Austria / Autriche

Venice Commission / Commission de Venise

– Ms / M^{me} Renata TARDIOLI, Member / membre
– Mr / M Gaël MARTIN-MICALLEF, Legal advisor, Venice Commission / Conseiller juridique, Commission de Venise

Secretariat / Secrétariat

– Mr / M. Chemavon CHAHBAZIAN, Head, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Cooperation Division/ Chef, Division de l'observation des élections et de la coopération interparlementaire
– Ms / M^{me} Anne GODFREY, Assistant, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Cooperation Division / Assistante, Division de l'observation des élections et de la coopération interparlementaire

Appendix 3 – List of members of the ad hoc committee for the observation of the Parliamentary elections in Georgia (31 October 2020)

Chairperson / Président: Tiny KOX, Netherlands/Pays-Bas, UEL/GUE

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)

– Ms / M^me^ Erika BENKÖ, Romania / Roumanie
– Mr / M. Reinhold LOPATKA, Austria / Autriche
– Mr / M. Matern von MARSCHALL, Germany, Allemagne
– Mr / M. Cezar Florin PREDA, Romania / Roumanie
– Mr / M. Jacek PROTASIEWICZ, Poland / Pologne

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group / Groupe des socialistes, démocrates et verts (SOC)

– Ms / M^me^ Petra BAYR, Austria / Autriche **
– Ms / M^me^ Marietta KARAMANLI, France
– Mr / M. Boriss CILEVIĆS, Latvia / Lettonie**
– Mr / M. Roberto RAMPI, Italy / Italie **
– Ms / M^me^ Bela BACH, Germany / Allemagne
– Mr / M. Krzysztof ŚMISZEK, Poland / Pologne
– Ms / M^me^ Jette CHRISTENSEN, Norway / Norvège
– Mr / M. André VALLINI, France **
– Mr / M. Andrzej SZEJNA, Poland / Pologne

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) / Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe (ADLE)

– Ms / M^me^ Marija GOLUBEVA, Latvia / Lettonie
– Mr / M. Hovhannes IGITYAN, Armenia / Arménie
– Mr / M. Edmon MARUKYAN, Armenia / Arménie
– Mr / M. Jacques LE NAY, France **

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Ms / M^me^ Kathrine OLLDAG, Denmark / Danemark

European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance (EC/DA) / Groupe des conservateurs européens et Alliance démocratique (CE/AD)

– Mr / M. Alberto RIBOLLA, Italy / Italie **
– Mr / M. Ulrich OEHME, Germany / Allemagne

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) / Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)

– Mr / M. Georgios KATROUGKALOS, Greece / Grèce
– Mr / M. Tiny KOX, Netherlands / Pays-Bas

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Mr / M. Jussi SARAMO, Finland / Finlande
– Ms / M^me^ Violeta TOMIĆ, Slovenia / Slovénie
– Mr / M. Sokratis FAMELLOS, Greece / Grèce

Co-Rapporteurs AS/MON (ex officio)

– Mr / M. Claude KERN, France

Venice Commission / Commission de Venise

– Ms / M^me^ Katharina PABEL, Austria / Autriche, substitute member
– Mr / M. Gaël MARTIN-MICALLEF, Legal advisor, Venice Commission / Conseiller juridique, Commission de Venise

Secretariat / Secrétariat

– Mr / M. Bogdan TORCĂTORIU, Administrative Officer, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Co-operation Division/ Division de l'observation des élections et de la coopération interparlementaire
– Ms / M^me^ Danièle GASTL, Assistant, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Co-operation Division / Assistante, Division de l'observation des élections et de la coopération interparlementaire
– Ms / M^me^ Anne GODFREY, Assistant, Election Observation and Interparliamentary Co-operation Division / Assistante, Division de l'observation des élections et de la coopération interparlementaire

***** election declaration missing

** has participated in at least 2 missions

Appendix 4 – List of members of the ad hoc committee for the observation of the presidential election in the Republic of Moldova (1 November 2020)

Chairperson / Président: Joe O'REILLLY, Ireland / Irlande, EPP-CD/ PPE-DC

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)

– Ms / M^{me} Borina ÅBERG, Sweden / Suède **
– Mr / M. Viorel Riceard BADEA, Romania / Roumanie **
– Mr / M. Joe O'REILLLY, Ireland / Irlande * **
– Mr / M. Aleksander POCIEJ, Poland / Pologne **
– Mr / M. Luís LEITE RAMOS, Portugal **
– Mr / M. Vladimir VARDANYAN, Armenia / Arménie*

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Mr / M. Eduard KÖCK, Austria / Autriche
– Mr / M. Cezar Florin PREDA, Romania / Roumanie **
– Mr / M. Francesco SCOMA, Italy / Italie

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group / Groupe des socialistes, démocrates et verts (SOC)

– Ms / M^{me} Yulya LOVOCHKINA, Ukraine**
– Lord Leslie GRIFFITHS, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni *
– Mr / M. Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ, Switzerland / Suisse **
– Mr / M. Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria / Autriche **
– Mr / M. Dino SOCOTAR, Romania / Roumanie
– Mr / M. George FOULKES, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni **

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Ms / M^{me} Margreet De BOER, Netherlands / Pays-Bas
– Mr / M. Kimmo KILJUNEN, Finland / Finlande * **
– Mr / M. Andrzej SZEJNA, Poland / Pologne

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) / Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe (ADLE)

– Mr / M. Georges-Louis BOUCHEZ, Belgium / Belgique
– Mr / M. Iulian BULAI, Romania / Roumanie
– Mr / M. Jean-Pierre GRIN, Switzerland / Suisse
– Mr / M. Christoph HOFFMANN, Germany / Allemagne

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Ms / M^{me} Kathrine OLLDAG, Denmark / Danemark

European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance (EC/DA) / Groupe des conservateurs européens et Alliance démocratique (CE/AD)

– Mr / M. Arkadiusz MULARCZYK, Poland / Pologne **
– Ms / M^me Theo CLARKE, United Kingdom / Royaume-Uni

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) / Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)

– Ms / M^me Violeta TOMIĆ, Slovenia / Slovénie

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Mr / M. Georgios KATROUGKALOS, Greece / Grèce

Co-Rapporteurs AS/MON (ex officio)

– Mr / M. Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ, Switzerland / Suisse **
– Mr / M. Egidijus VAREIKIS, Lithuania / Lituanie *

* election declaration missing

** has participated in at least 2 missions

Appendix 5 – List of members of the ad hoc committee for the observation of the early parliamentary elections in Jordan (10 November 2020)

Chairperson / Président: Mr / M. Aleksander POCIEJ, Poland / Pologne***

Group of the European People's Party (EPP/CD) / Groupe du Parti populaire européen (PPE/DC)

– Mr / M. Aleksander POCIEJ, Poland / Pologne***
– Mr / M. Aleksander STOKKEBØ, Norway / Norvège*
– Ms / M^{me} Els VAN HOOF, Belgium / Belgique

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Mr / M. Zsolt CSENGER-ZALÁN, Hungary / Hongrie
– Ms / M^{me} Alina Ştefania GORGHIU, Romania / Roumanie**
– Mr / M. Reinhold LOPATKA, Austria / Autriche**
– Mr / M. Cezar Florin PREDA, Romania / Roumanie**
– Mr / M. Jacek PROTASIEWICZ, Poland / Pologne
– Mr / M. Francesco SCOMA, Italy / Italie

Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group / Groupe des socialistes, démocrates et verts (SOC)

– Mr / M. Kimmo KILJUNEN, Finland / Finlande **
– Mr / M. Paulo PISCO, Portugal
– Ms / M^{me} Maria Luisa BUSTINDUY, Spain / Espagne

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Mr / M. Stefan SCHENNACH, Austria / Autriche***
– Ms / M^{me} Bela BACH, Germany / Allemagne*
– Ms / M^{me} Susana SUMELZO, Spain / Espagne*
– Ms / M^{me} Zita GURMAI, Hungary / Hongrie*
– Mr / M. André VALLINI, France**
– Mr / M. Antonia GUTIÉRREZ, Spain / Espagne**
– Mr / M. Krysztof ŚMISZEK, Poland / Pologne
– Mr / M. Pierre-Alain FRIDEZ, Switzerland / Suisse **
– Mr / M. Roberto RAMPI, Italy / Italie**
– Mr / M. Andrzej SZEJNA, Poland / Pologne

Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) / Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe (ADLE)

– Ms / M^{me} Petra STIENEN, Netherlands / Pays-Bas
– Mr / M. Fabien GOUTTEFARDE, France

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Ms / M^{me} Fiona O'LOUGHLIN, Ireland / Irlande
– Ms / M^{me} Alexandra LOUIS, France**

– Mr / M. Bertrand BOUYX, France

– Ms / M^{me} Maša KOCIPER, Slovenia / Slovénie

European Conservatives Group and Democratic Alliance (EC/DA) / Groupe des conservateurs européens et Alliance démocratique (CE/AD)

– Mr / M. Axel KASSEGGER, Austria / Autriche

– Mr / M. Alberto RIBOLLA, Italy / Italie**

Substitutes / Suppléants

– Mr / M. Arkadiusz MULARCZYK, Poland / Pologne **

Group of the Unified European Left (UEL) / Groupe pour la gauche unitaire européenne (GUE)

– Mr / M. Sergey KALASHNIKOV, Russian Federation / Fédération de Russie

Substitutes / Suppléants

Rapporteur AS/POL(ex officio)

– Mr / M. George LOUCAIDES, Cyprus / Chypre

* election declaration missing

** has participated in at least 2 missions

Appendix 6 – Meetings of the Standing Committee and the Bureau in 2021

Preliminary proposals for dates[5]

Memorandum prepared by the Secretariat of the Assembly

Monday 25 January[6], 8.00 am Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Friday 29 January[7], 8.30 am Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Thursday 4 March[8], 3.00 pm, Paris: Bureau (tbc)

Friday 5 March[9], 9.30 am, Paris: Standing Committee (tbc)

Monday 19 April, 8.00 am, Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Friday 23 April, 8.30 am, Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Thursday 27 May,3.00 pm, Budapest: Bureau (tbc)

Friday 28 May, 9.00 am, Budapest: Standing Committee (tbc) (CM Chairmanship)

Monday 21 June, 8.00 am, Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Friday 25 June, 8.30 am, Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Monday 6 September, 9.00 am, Paris: Bureau

Monday 27 September, 8.00 am, Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Friday 1 October, 8.30 am, Strasbourg (part-session): Bureau

Thursday 25 November, Rome: Bureau (tbc)

Friday 26 November, Rome: Standing Committee (tbc) (CM Chairmanship)

Friday 10 December, 9.00 am, Paris: Bureau

5. Dates of meetings due to be held elsewhere than in Strasbourg and Paris are subject to the agreement of the Parliament of the country concerned.
6. This date was subsequently modified to Friday 22 January.
7. This date was subsequently modified to Monday 1st February.
8. This date was subsequently modified to Thursday 18 March, in Berlin.
9. This date was subsequently modified to Friday 19 March, in Berlin

Appendix 7 – Institutional representation of the Parliamentary Assembly in 2020

Body / *Organe*	who represents the Assembly / *qui représente l'Assemblée*	reference	2020
I. Council of Europe bodies / *Organes du Conseil de l'Europe*			
European Commission for Democracy through Law Venice Commission *Commission européenne pour la démocratie par le droit – Commission de Venise*	Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau to attend the sessions of the Commission *Représentants de l'Assemblée désignés par le Bureau pour assister aux sessions de la Commission*	Article 2.4 of the Venice Commission Statute (Res CM (2002) 3) *Article 2.4 du statut de la Commission de Venise* *(Rés CM (2002) 3)*	Members: Appointment by the President Mr Vardanyan (Armenia EPP/CD) (AS/Jur) Substitute: Lord Richard Balfe (United Kingdom, NR) (AS/Jur)
Council for Democratic Elections of the Venice Commission *Conseil des élections démocratiques de la Commission de Venise*	Representatives of AS/Pol, AS/Jur and AS/Mon approved by the Bureau of the Assembly *Représentants de l'AS/Pol, l'AS/Jur et l'AS/Mon approuvés par le Bureau de l'Assemblée*	Bureau decision of 10 March 2003 *Décision du Bureau du 10 mars 2003*	Members: Mr Fassino (Italy, SOC) (AS/Pol) Mr Antonio Gutiérrez (Spain, SOC) (AS/Jur) Mr Kox (Netherlands, UEL) (AS/Mon) Substitutes: Mr Cozmanciuc (Romania, EPP/CD) (AS/Pol) Sir Christopher Chope (United Kingdom, EC/DA) (AS/Jur) Mr Pociej (Poland, EPP/CD) (AS/Mon)
European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity North-South Centre *Centre européen pour l'interdépendance et la solidarité mondiales – Centre Nord-Sud*	Two members of the Executive Council – appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly *Deux membres du Conseil exécutif – désignés par le Bureau de l'Assemblée*	Article 4.2 (b) of the North-South Centre revised Statute (Res CM (2011) 6) *Article 4.2 (b) du statut révisé du Centre Nord-Sud* *(Rés CM (2011) 6)*	Members: Mr Schennach (Austria, SOC) (AS/Soc) Mr Leite Ramos (Portugal, EPP/CD (AS/Cult) Substitutes: Ms Günay (Turkey, EC) (AS/Soc) Mr Carlos Alberto Gonçalves (Portugal, EPP/CD) (AS/Cult)
European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance ECRI *Commission européenne contre le racisme et l'intolérance – ECRI*	Representatives of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau (representatives of the following three committees: AS/Pol, AS/Ega and AS/Cult) *Représentants de l'Assemblée désignés par le Bureau (représentants des trois commissions suivantes: AS/Pol, AS/Ega et AS/Cult)*	Article 5 of the ECRI Statute (Res CM (2002) 8) *Article 5 du statut de l'ECRI (Rés CM (2002) 8)*	Members: Mr Corlăţean (Romania, SOC) (AS/Pol) Mr Cepeda (Spain, SOC) (AS/Cult) Mr Jallow (Sweden, UEL) (AS/Ega) Substitutes: Ms Yasko (Ukraine, EPP/CD) (AS/Pol) Mr Ben Chikha (Belgium, SOC) (AS/Ega) Mr Avetisyan (Armenia, SOC) (AS/Cult)

Body / *Organe*	**who represents the Assembly / *qui représente l'Assemblée***	**reference**	**2020**
Group of States against Corruption GRECO *Groupe d'états contre la corruption – GRECO*	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau *Un représentant de l'Assemblée désigné par le Bureau*	CM decision of 717th meeting in 2000 in accordance with Article 7.2 of the Statute of the GRECO *Décision du CM lors de la 717ème réunion en 2000 selon l'Article 7.2. du Statut du GRECO*	Member: Mr López (Andorra, SOC) (AS/Jur) Substitute: Mr Vlasenko (Ukraine, EPP/CD) (AS/Jur)
Committee for Works of Art *Comité des œuvres d'art*	Two members appointed by the Bureau of the Assembly (at present AS/Cult Committee member and Museum Prize rapporteur) *Deux membres désignés par le Bureau de l'Assemblée (actuellement un membre de l'AS/Cult et le rapporteur du Prix du musée)*	CM decision of 482nd meeting in 1992 *Décision du CM lors de la 482ème réunion en 1992*	Members: Lady Eccles (UK, EC/DA) (AS/Cult) Mr Rampi (Italy, SOC) (AS/Cult)
MONEYVAL	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau *Un représentant de l'Assemblée désigné par le Bureau*	Article 4.1 of Resolution CM/Res (2010) 12 *Article 4.1 de la Résolution* *CM/Res (2010) 12*	Member: Mr Corlăţean (Romania, SOC) (AS/Jur) Substitute: Sir Edward Leigh (UK, EC/DA) (AS/Jur)
Council of Europe Convention on Offences relating to Cultural Property *Convention du Conseil de l'Europe sur les infractions visant des biens culturels*	A representative of the Assembly appointed by the Bureau *Un représentant de l'Assemblée désigné par le Bureau*	STCE n°221 CM(2017) 32, Chapter V, Article 23.1	
II. Other			
EUROPA NOSTRA Pan-European Federation for Heritage *EUROPA NOSTRA – Fédération paneuropéenne du patrimoine*	One member (and substitute) to be nominated by the Assembly – to attend the Federation Council meetings as observer *Un membre (et son/sa suppléant/e) qui seront désignés par l'Assemblée pour assister aux réunions du Conseil de la Fédération en tant qu'observateurs*	Article 21.4 of the Statute of Europa Nostra	Mr Gryffroy (Belgium, NR) (AS/Cult)

Appendix 8 – Decisions taken by the Bureau at its meeting on 31 January 2020, and subsequently ratified by the Assembly on 31 January 2020

Doc. 15036 **Add. 3**

31 January 2020

Activities of the Assembly's Bureau and Standing Committee (31 January 2020)

Progress report

Bureau of the Assembly

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

1. Decisions of the Bureau of 31 January 2020 requiring ratification by the Assembly

1.1. References and transmissions to committees

1.1.1. References to committees

The Bureau considered and approved the following references:

– Doc. 15030, Motion for a resolution, *Stopping harassment of women and men speaking out for the right to abort*: reference to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination for report;

– Bureau decision, *Modification of the Assembly's Rules of Procedure – follow-up to Resolution 2319 (2020) on the Complementary joint procedure between the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly in response to a serious violation by a member State of its statutory obligations*: reference to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs *for report*;

– Bureau decision, *Gender representation in the Parliamentary Assembly* (follow-up to the challenge of credentials): reference to the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs *for report* and to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for opinion*;

– Bureau decision, *Recent developments in Libya and in the Middle East: what consequences for Europe?*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report*.

1.1.2. Requests for modification of references

The Bureau considered and approved the following modifications of references:

– Doc. 14976, Motion for a resolution, *The activities of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*: reference to the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy *for report* and to the Committee Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for opinion*;

– Doc. 15011, Motion for a resolution, *Discrimination against persons dealing with long-term illness*: reference to the Committee on Social Affairs, Health and Sustainable Development *for report* and to the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination *for opinion*.

1.2. Composition of the Monitoring Committee, the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs and 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 EPP/CD Group, appointed Ms Boriana Åberg (Sweden), Mr Viorel Riceard Badea (Romania), Mr Bernard Fournier (France), Mr Nikola Poposki (North Macedonia), Mr Tomislav Tolušić (Croatia) and Mr Nicos Tornaritis (Cyprus) as members;

– on the basis of a proposal by the SOC Group, appointed Mr Andrzej Szejna (Poland) as member.

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

The Bureau:

– on the basis of a proposal by the EPP/CD Group, appointed Mr Giorgi Kandelaki (Georgia), Ms Annicka Engblom (Sweden), Ms Linda Ozola (Latvia), Mr Vladimir Vardanyan (Armenia) and Mr Sergiy Vlasenko (Ukraine) as members;

– on the basis of a proposal by the SOC Group, appointed Ms Selin Sayek Böke (Turkey), Ms Yuliya Lovochkina (Ukraine) and Mr Constantinos Efstathiou (Cyprus) as members.

1.2.3. 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) as member and Mr Evripidis Stylianidis (Greece) as alternate;

– on the basis of a proposal by the SOC Group, appointed Ms Margreet De Boer (Netherlands), Ms Klotilda Bushka (Albania) and Mr Andrzej Szejna (Poland) as members, and Mr Irakli Kobakhidze (Georgia) as alternate;

– on the basis of a proposal by the ALDE Group, appointed Ms Stephanie Krisper (Austria) and Ms Emilie Enger Mehl (Norway) as members.

1.3. Poland: presidential election (10 May 2020 tbc)

Subject to receiving an invitation, the Bureau decided to observe this election and constituted an ad hoc committee for this purpose composed of 20 members (EPP/CD: 6; SOC: 6, ALDE: 4: EC/DA: 3, UEL: 1), as well as of the co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee; and to conduct a pre-electoral mission.

Appendix 9 – Dates of Assembly part-sessions (2023-2025)

AS/Bur (2020) 17rev

6 October 2020

Bureau of the Assembly

Dates of Assembly part-sessions (2023 – 2025)

Memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly

General principles

1. In 1994, the Bureau decided that the dates of Assembly part-sessions should be fixed for the last full week of the months of January, April, June and September in each year. However, at its meeting on 3 September 2002, taking note of the risk of an overlap with the session of the European Parliament (EP) in September, the Bureau decided to amend the general rule and to fix the 4th part-session of each year for the week after the last week in the month of September.

2. With a view to the co-ordination of national and international parliamentary timetables, the Bureau usually approves the dates of part-sessions for a 3-4-year period two to three years before the start of that period. The dates for 2020-2022 were approved by the Bureau in January 2017.

April part-sessions

3. On several occasions, the Bureau had to change the date of this part-session, either to avoid a clash with the Catholic or Orthodox Easter holidays or with the session of the EP.

4. In order to facilitate the travel arrangements for those MPs who are concerned by the Orthodox Easter dates, it was agreed that the April 2020 part-session would open on Monday at 4 pm instead of 11.30 am. Similar arrangements will have to be proposed for the April 2022 part-session.

5. April 2025 part-session will have to be advanced to 7-11 April also in order to avoid a clash with Easter holidays. In view of past experience with the EP, it cannot be excluded that a change of date may have to be envisaged depending on the dates still to be chosen by the EP. For the moment, the EP has fixed its plenary session dates only up to 2022.

October part-sessions

6. The issue of a clash of dates with the EP session has sometimes arisen also for the 4th part-session, despite the decision taken by the Bureau in 2002. This is particularly the case as the current practice of the EP is to fix two plenary sessions in Strasbourg in October, at present during the first and last week in October. According to the information received from the EP secretariat, this schedule is likely to continue in the foreseeable future.

Proposed decisions

7. Table 1 below gives the dates for the years 2020 to 2022 already approved for information. In order to have an overview for the years 2023-2025, table 2 below provides the dates of the part-sessions on the basis of the decision taken or indications given by the Bureau. The dates proposed do not coincide with public holidays in the host country of the Council of Europe. As a general rule, it is proposed that the Assembly should meet the second full week in October, unless it could meet during a week which starts the last days in September and ends the first days in October (e.g. in 2021, 2024 and 2025, see below).

8. The Bureau is invited to agree with the dates proposed below for the part-sessions for the years **2023-2025**, subject to ratification by the Assembly.

Table 1: part-sessions of the Assembly for 2020 – 2022 (dates already approved)

2020	2021	2022
27-31 January	25-29 January	24-28 January
20-24 April	19-23 April	25-29 April
22-26 June	21-25 June	20-24 June

2020	2021	2022
12-16 October	27 September-1 October	10-14 October

Table 2: part-sessions of the Assembly for 2023 – 2025 (dates to be agreed)

2023	2024	2025
23-27 January	22-26 January	27-31 January
24-28 April	22-26 April	7-11 April
19-23 June[10]	24-28 June	23-27 June
9-13 October	30 September-4 October	29 September-3 October

10. Dates of the 2023 June part-session advanced by one week due to the Muslim holiday Eid al-adha.

Appendix 10 – Declaration on an urgent need for a democratic, broad-based and inclusive political process in Belarus

1. The Parliamentary Assembly's political dialogue with the representatives of the Belarusian National Assembly, the opposition forces as well as the civil society aims at promoting in Belarus the values and principles of pluralist democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights and freedoms, thus opening the Pan-European acquis for the people of Belarus.

2. The Assembly recalls that its relations with the National Assembly of Belarus date back to 1992, when it was granted Special Guest status. Lack of democratic progress and continued violation of human rights led to the suspension of the Special Guest Status in 1997. The accession process, initiated in 1993, was subsequently frozen.

3. Nevertheless, the Assembly recalls that, although not a member state of the Council of Europe, to date, Belarus has signed and ratified 12 Council of Europe treaties and protocols and has joined four Partial Agreements: the European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission), the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sports and the European Pharmacopeia. Recently, the co-operation was intensified through two successive Action Plans whose implementation is facilitated by the Council of Europe Information Point in Minsk.

4. While welcoming existing avenues of co-operation which aim at bringing Belarus's legal and institutional framework closer to Council of Europe standards, the Assembly deplores the lack of respect, by the authorities, of democratic standards and fundamental rights and freedoms.

5. It recalls that, in its past reports on the situation in Belarus, it expressed strong concerns about systemic human rights violations. Furthermore, it notes that the existence of death penalty and the continued practice of execution of death sentences makes Belarus the only European country to use this inhuman and unacceptable punishment which constitutes a major obstacle for the development of our relations.

6. Furthermore, in its reports on the observation of parliamentary and presidential elections, the Assembly has repeatedly highlighted the lack of level playing field in the electoral process that prevented candidates from campaigning on equal footing and did not allow the voters to make an informed, free and democratic choice.

7. Against this background, the Assembly strongly regrets the fact that the presidential election of 9 August 2020, conducted under the existing electoral system, were far from being free and fair and failed to meet international standards for democratic elections and Belarus's commitments under international human rights legal instruments.

8. The Assembly strongly condemns the excessive use of force by law enforcement and the military against peaceful protestors in the aftermath of the elections and urges the Belarus authorities to put an immediate halt on violence and intimidation, to release all detained protesters and to promptly launch full, transparent and impartial investigation into the multiple cases of police violence and brutality in order to bring to justice all those responsible. This is an essential first step for restoring the confidence of the citizens in the authorities and in institutions.

9. The Assembly expresses solidarity with the courage and determination of the people of Belarus who continue to defend their fundamental rights and freedoms peacefully and responsibly.

10. The Assembly commends in particular women's active participation in the political process as engaged citizens, voters, leaders and campaigners, and stresses once more that the participation of women in political and public decision-making is a fundamental right and a key condition for justice and democracy.

11. The people of Belarus have demonstrated their commitment to the common values of the European family where they fully belong. Their demand for democratic change and reforms must be met with an open and constructive attitude by the authorities.

12. The Assembly recalls that the Council of Europe's strategic objective remains the rapprochement and accession of Belarus to the Organisation, its values and principles. It hopes that Belarus will initiate political and democratic reforms and work together with the Assembly and the Council of Europe towards restoring the Special Guest status and resuming the accession process.

13. The Assembly considers that a democratic, broad-based and inclusive national political process, fully involving civil society, needs to be urgently launched in Belarus, as a first step towards a peaceful way out of the current crisis and to open the door for the necessary reforms, starting from the constitutional and electoral reforms.

14. The Assembly reiterates its readiness to support this process – in close co-operation with the Council of Europe advisory bodies, in particular the Venice Commission – by intensifying co-operation with the National Assembly of Belarus, all political stakeholders, as well as the civil society. In this regard, the Assembly welcomes the initiatives of its Committees and calls on the authorities, all political stakeholders and the civil society to fully co-operate with the Assembly rapporteurs.

Appendix 11 – Declaration on the parliamentary contribution to the Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship on: "Effectively responding to a public health crisis in full respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law"

1. The Parliamentary Assembly recalls its action and contribution towards efforts responding to the Covid-19 health crisis and its consequences, including its supporting efforts at national and Council of Europe levels to find viable and sustainable solutions to contain the pandemic.

2. The Assembly draws attention to the reports, recommendations and resolutions it adopted on various aspects of the crisis in June and October 2020, and calls for their full implementation:

a. Lessons for the future from an effective and rights-based response to the Covid-19 pandemic

b. Democracies facing the Covid-19 pandemic;

c. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on human rights and the rule of law

d. Upholding human rights in times of crisis and pandemics: gender, equality and non-discrimination

e. Humanitarian consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic for migrants and refugees

3. The Assembly reiterates its commitment to continue providing input to the important work carried out by the other Statutory Organ of the Council of Europe, the Committee of Ministers, including through the preparation of five additional reports focusing on Covid-19:

a. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on education and culture

b. Impact of Covid-19 on children´s rights

c. Towards a Covid-19 vaccine: ethical, legal and practical considerations

d. Overcoming the socio-economic crisis sparked by the Covid-19 pandemic

e. Protecting the pillars of democracy during health crises

4. The Assembly stresses the importance of a human rights, rule of law and democracy centered approach in responding to the pandemic challenges.

5. Furthermore, the Assembly urges governments to ensure that all measures taken are gender-responsive, and special attention is placed on tackling increased risks of violence against women, including domestic violence, as well as on full respect of children's rights.

6. The Assembly stresses the need for parliamentary scrutiny of all measures taken by the authorities when addressing the new waves of the novel coronavirus.

7. The Assembly welcomes progress as regards vaccine development and underlines the need to ensure equitable deployment to ensure its efficacy. It will debate this very issue during its January 2021 part-session from the ethical, legal and practical angle.

8. Taking into consideration all the above, the Assembly welcomes the Athens Declaration by the Committee of Ministers Chairmanship, as well as the "Secretary General's Toolkit", and resolves to continue working in close coordination with the Committee of Ministers to support the implementation of the standards, measures and policies contained therein.

9. Finally, the Assembly invites its Observers and Partners for democracy delegations to join forces with the Assembly in this regard.