Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Resolution 2492 (2023)[1]

Assessing the functioning of the partnership for democracy

Parliamentary Assembly

1. In June 2009, the Parliamentary Assembly adopted Resolution 1680 (2009) "Establishment of a 'partner for democracy' status with the Parliamentary Assembly", in which it reaffirmed its strong commitment to developing co-operation with neighbouring regions as a means of consolidating democratic transformations and promoting stability, good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law. The new status was introduced in the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly by Resolution 1698 (2009) in November 2009 as a new Rule 60 (now Rule 64) and entered into force in January 2010.

2. The Assembly recalls that granting of partner for democracy status is conditional on a political commitment, on the part of the candidate parliament, to embrace the values of the Council of Europe, which are pluralist and gender parity-based democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. The granting of this status constitutes a recognition by the Assembly of the democratic aspirations of parliaments requesting or already enjoying that status. The partnership is a dynamic tool aimed at promoting parliamentary democracy, facilitating democratic transformations in partner countries and assisting partner parliaments in strengthening democratic institutions, good governance and the rule of law.

3. The Assembly further recalls Resolution 1818 (2011) "Request for Partner for Democracy status with the Parliamentary Assembly submitted by the Parliament of Morocco", whereby it stated that progress in taking forward reforms is the prime aim of the partnership for democracy and should constitute the benchmark for assessing its efficiency.

4. The Parliaments of Jordan, Kyrgyzstan and Morocco, as well as the Palestinian National Council, have obtained partner for democracy status. The Assembly has considered specific reports on the evaluation of the partnership for democracy in respect of these parliaments and has reviewed progress made in achieving the aims of the partnership.

5. The Assembly believes that, overall, the partnership has reached its statutory goal of establishing structured and values-based co-operation with parliaments of neighbouring countries willing to develop closer relations with the Assembly. It has contributed, though to varying degrees, to the strengthening of the role of parliaments in consolidating democratic transformations and promoting stability, good governance, respect for human rights and the rule of law. It has also offered to partner parliamentarians an opportunity to participate, on an institutionalised basis, in the European political debate.

6. Based on this experience, the Assembly deems it appropriate to consider ways to improve the functioning of the partnership with a view to making it more meaningful and effective for both the Assembly and the partners.

7. The Assembly resolves that the following rights shall be granted to partner for democracy delegations in addition to those foreseen by Rule 64:

7.1. the chairpersons of partner for democracy delegations shall have the right to participate in the meetings of the Standing Committee;

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1. *Assembly debate* on 25 April 2023 (11th sitting) (see Doc. 15740, report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Ms Ria Oomen-Ruijten). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 25 April 2023 (11th sitting).

7.2. members of partner for democracy delegations shall have the right to put spontaneous oral questions to guest speakers in plenary sittings of the Assembly and in meetings of the Standing Committee;

7.3. partner for democracy delegations shall have the right to designate their members to work in Assembly committees and sub-committees (including ad hoc sub-committees) open to them. The names of such designated members should appear on the lists of committees and sub-committees under the heading "partners for democracy" and added to the number of committee members designated by the delegations of member States in accordance with Rule 44.1;

7.4. members of partner for democracy delegations shall have the right to be appointed as full members in various networks set up in the Assembly.

8. The Assembly further resolves that some additional rights may be granted to partner for democracy delegations which have shown outstanding results in achieving the goals of the partnership and participate fully in the work of the Assembly and its committees. Such additional rights for the delegations and their members may include:

8.1. the right to table motions for recommendation and resolution, subject to co-signature by a member of the Assembly, with both names appearing as authors of the motion;

8.2. the right to table amendments, subject to co-signature by a member of the Assembly, with both names appearing as authors of the amendment;

8.3. the right to request current affairs debates and to be chosen to open such debates. If such a request is made by an individual member of a partner for democracy delegation, it should be subject to co-signature by a member of the Assembly, with both names appearing as authors of the request and having the support of 19 more members of the Assembly. If a request is made by a partner for democracy delegation, it should be supported by a political group, a national delegation or a committee, as provided by Rule 53.2;

8.4. the right to table written declarations, subject to co-signature by a member of the Assembly, with both names appearing as authors of the written declaration;

8.5. the right to be appointed as rapporteur for information reports which do not contain a draft resolution and/or recommendation.

9. The additional rights referred to in paragraph 8 above may be granted by decision of the Bureau, ratified by the Assembly, at the beginning of a new session (in January). The decision shall be based on a proposal by the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy. Extended rights shall be granted for the duration of the session (one year) with the possibility to extend or not to extend them depending on the results.

10. The Assembly encourages its committees open to the participation of partners for democracy to:

10.1. consider organising more meetings and other activities in co-operation with the partner delegations, including in their countries. Members of partner delegations should be associated more closely with the preparation of various events and be given prominent roles in the programmes of such events;

10.2. increase the visibility of the input of partners in the work of the committees, for example by indicating on their agendas whenever an item is added following a proposal from a partner delegation;

10.3. show more creativity and flexibility in order to facilitate and highlight the positive contribution of partners to their activities.

11. The Assembly encourages the partner delegations to make their participation in the work of the Assembly better known in their respective parliaments, for example by presenting regular reports on the activities, priorities and key decisions of the Assembly.

12. The Assembly encourages its presidents to consider holding regular meetings with the speakers of partner parliaments in order to have an overview of the functioning of the partnership, make it more visible and provide it with political impetus.

13. The Assembly will continue to offer various training activities to members and the staff of partner parliaments on issues defined by common agreement.

14. The Assembly recalls that, in accordance with Resolution 1680 (2009), the national parliaments of all southern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries participating in the Barcelona Process-Union for the Mediterranean and of central Asian countries participating in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe should be eligible to request partner for democracy status. Furthermore, requests from parliaments of other States may also be considered, if the Bureau of the Assembly so decides.

15. The Assembly asks its relevant committee to prepare amendments to its Rules of Procedure in accordance with this Resolution.