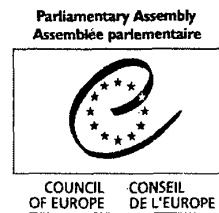


Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire



Doc. 10515
25 April 2005

**Progress report of the Bureau of the Assembly and of the
Standing Committee
(28 January – 25 April 2005)**

Bureau of the Assembly
Rapporteur: Mr Serhiy Holovaty, Ukraine, Liberal, Democratic and Reformers' Group

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Bureau met on 28 January in Strasbourg and on 18 March in Paris and on 25 April in Strasbourg. The Standing Committee met on 18 March in Paris.

2. FUNCTIONING OF THE ASSEMBLY

A. PROGRESS REPORT OF THE BUREAU OF THE ASSEMBLY AND OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE (28 JANUARY – 25 APRIL 2005)

2. On 28 January, the Bureau appointed Mr Holovaty (LDR, Ukraine) as rapporteur.
3. On 25 April, the Bureau approved the Progress report covering the period from 28 January to 25 April 2005.

B. FOLLOW-UP TO THE 1ST PART OF THE 2005 ORDINARY SESSION (24-28 JANUARY 2005)

4. On 28 January, the Bureau:
 - i. addresses of Mr Viktor Yuschenko, President of Ukraine, Mr Mikheil Saakashvili, President of Georgia and Mr Michel Barnier, French Foreign Minister: asked the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to prepare a memorandum for the next Bureau meeting on the follow-up to be given by the Assembly to the proposals contained in these addresses;
 - ii. Recommendation 1693 (2005) on the Third Summit: was informed that the President will address letters to the Speakers of the national parliaments calling on them, in conformity with paragraph 17, to organise debates on the Third Summit;
 - iii. Resolution 1416 (2005) on the conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference: asked the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to prepare a memorandum for the next Bureau meeting on the implementation of paragraph 5 with regard to:

- the composition of the ad hoc committee of the Bureau decided by the Assembly, which should include, besides the Chairpersons of the national delegations mentioned in this paragraph, representatives of the Committees concerned and, at the same time, representatives of all political groups of the Assembly;
 - the precise mandate of this ad hoc committee;
- iv. Resolution 1420 (2005) on prospects for peace in the Middle East: asked the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to prepare a memorandum for the next Bureau meeting on the implementation of paragraph 12;
- v. Resolution 1415 (2005) on honouring of obligations and commitments by Georgia: took note that the President will address letters to the Speakers of the Russian and Georgian Parliaments offering, in conformity with paragraph 12, the Assembly's good offices for a bilateral parliamentary dialogue.
5. On 18 March, the Bureau:
- i. Addresses of Mr Viktor Yuschenko, President of Ukraine, Mr Mikheil Saakashvili, President of Georgia and Mr Michel Barnier, Minister for Foreign Affairs of France:
- took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly and approved the proposals contained therein, in particular:
- a. Address of President Yuschenko:
- welcomed the decision of the Presidential Committee to visit Kyiv, possibly at the beginning of July 2005;
 - decided, in principle, to set up a broadly based ad hoc committee to observe the parliamentary elections in Ukraine in March 2006;
 - invited the Assembly's committees to organise conferences and seminars, within their areas of competence and within the limits of the available budgetary resources, on the priority matters indicated by President Yuschenko in his address;
 - asked the Secretary General of the Assembly to examine the possibility of organising training seminars in the framework of the parliamentary co-operation programme;
- b. Address of President Saakashvili:
- took note of the intention of the President of the Assembly to meet with the heads of the Russian and Georgian parliamentary delegations during the April 2005 part-session in order to help strengthen the bilateral parliamentary dialogue;
 - invited the Political Affairs Committee to consider organising a round table with the Georgian authorities and other parties concerned to discuss President's Saakashvili peace initiative announced in Strasbourg;
- c. Address of Mr Barnier, Foreign Minister of France:
- took note of the action being taken by the President of the Assembly with a view to strengthening relations with the European Union;
 - agreed to invite Mr Barroso, President of the European Commission, as well as other members of the European Commission, to address the Assembly;

- asked the Committee on the Rules of Procedure and Immunities to make a proposal for the inclusion in the Assembly's Rules of Procedure of a new rule on co-operation with the European Parliament;
 - invited the Political Affairs Committee to consider organising a colloquy on the Council of Europe's contribution to the European Union's new neighbourhood policy in the framework of the preparation of the report on the external relations of the Council of Europe;
- ii. Resolution 1416 (2005) on the conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference:
- took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of paragraph 5 of this Resolution;
 - established an ad hoc committee on the implementation of paragraph 5 of this Resolution as specified in the memorandum;
 - decided to come back to this matter at its next meeting with a view to approving the composition of this ad hoc committee and appointing its Chairperson;
- iii. Resolution 1420 (2005) on prospects for peace in the Middle East:
- took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly on the implementation of paragraphs 12 and 13 of this Resolution;
 - invited the Assembly committees, except the Monitoring Committee, to consider the possibility of organising in their respective fields of action activities on issues of specific interest to representatives of the Knesset and the Palestinian Legislative Council;
 - invited the Political Affairs Committee to submit to it a proposal on the composition, programme and working methods of a tripartite forum under the aegis of the Sub-Committee on the Middle East involving an equal number of representatives from the Knesset and the Palestinian Legislative Council;
 - noted that the President of the Palestinian Authority has been invited to address the Assembly's April 2005 part-session;
 - asked the Secretary General of the Assembly to consider, in close co-operation with his Palestinian counterpart, the possibility of organising training seminars for parliamentarians and staff members from the Palestinian Legislative Council.

C. 2ND PART OF THE 2005 ORDINARY SESSION (25-29 APRIL 2005)

6. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- adopted the draft agenda and drew up the draft order of business;
- proposed the following subjects for the Joint Committee to take place on Thursday 28 April at 6.30 pm.:
 - Third Summit of the Council of Europe;
 - Budget of the Council of Europe and of the Assembly for 2006;
 - Timetable for the election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights;
 - Council of Europe draft Conventions under preparation (draft convention on action against trafficking in human beings and the draft convention on the prevention of terrorism).

7. On 25 April, the Bureau:

i. requests for debates under urgent procedure:

➤ "Constitutional reform process in Armenia":

- took note of the letters of Mr Torosyan, Chairman of the parliamentary delegation of Armenia to the Assembly and Mr Kocharyan, member of the parliamentary delegation of Armenia to the Assembly;
- recommended to the Assembly to hold this urgent debate and to refer the matter to the Monitoring Committee for report and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights for oral opinion;

➤ "Freedom of the press and the working conditions of journalists in conflict zones":

- recommended to the Assembly to hold this urgent debate and to refer the matter to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education for report and to the Political Affairs Committee for oral opinion;

ii. request for a current affairs debate:

➤ "European Constitutional Treaty":

- recommended to the Assembly to hold this current affairs debate;
- asked Mr Einarsson to open the debate;

iii. updated the draft order of business as follows:

Monday 25 April:

- included the debate on "the rights of children in institutions: follow-up to Recommendation 1601 (2003) of the Parliamentary Assembly" as the last debate in the afternoon instead of the debate on "Migration and integration: a challenge and an opportunity for Europe";

Tuesday 26 April:

- postponed the debate on "Referendums: towards good practices in Europe" until Friday as the first debate in the morning instead of the debate on "Iran's nuclear programme: need for international response";
- included the debate on "Iran's nuclear programme: need for international response" as the last debate in the afternoon;
- proposed to end the sitting at 7.15 pm;

Wednesday 27 April:

- proposed to end the morning sitting at 1.30 pm;
- proposed to hold a joint debate on the reports on "Discrimination against women in the workforce and the workplace" and "Discrimination against women and girls in sport";
- included the debate on "Migration and integration: a challenge and an opportunity for Europe" as the last debate in the afternoon;
- proposed to end the sitting at 8.00 pm in the evening;

Thursday 28 April:

- included the urgent debate on "Constitutional reform process in Armenia" as the first debate in the morning and the urgent debate on "Freedom of the press and the working conditions of journalists in conflict zones" as the second debate in the morning;
- included the current affairs debate on "European Constitutional Treaty" as the second point in the afternoon instead of the debate on "the rights of children in institutions: follow-up to Recommendation 1601 (2003) of the Parliamentary Assembly";

Friday 29 April:

- included the debate on "Referendums: towards good practices in Europe" as the first debate in the morning instead of the debate on "Iran's nuclear programme: need for international response";
- iv. proposed to limit the speaking time on Wednesday 27 April to 4 minutes;
- v. Joint Committee (28 April at 6.30 pm):
- took note of the letter of Mr Kocel, Chairman of the Ministers' Deputies, asking to add a new item on the draft agenda on the relations between the Council of Europe and the OSCE and decided to include this item on the draft agenda provided that this discussion will take place on the basis of the document on this matter which is currently under consideration in the Ministers' Deputies;
 - took note that the President will mention the question of the timetable for the election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights in his introductory statement and consequently agreed not to include this question as a formal item on the draft agenda;
 - took note that the President had sent a letter to Mr Rotfeld, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers, asking if the Assembly could receive, in advance, the latest versions of both the Draft Declaration and Action Plan which will be submitted to the Heads of State and Government at the Third Summit;
 - took note of the decision taken by the Ministers' Deputies at the 921st meeting on 30 March 2005 concerning the item on the timetable for the election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights;
- vii. Election of a judge to the European Court of Human Rights with respect to Latvia:
- took note that the Sub-Committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights will only interview the candidates on Monday 25 April in the afternoon (at 1.30 pm) and agreed to the written consultation of Bureau members on this matter;
 - urged the Assembly's political groups to ensure the best possible participation of their members in the meetings of the Sub-Committee on the election of judges to the European Court of Human Rights.

D. MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE (PARIS, 18 MARCH 2005)

8. On 28 January, the Bureau approved the draft agenda.

9. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- Request for an urgent debate: took note of the request by the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men to hold an urgent debate on the "Draft Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings", recommended to the Standing Committee to hold this urgent debate and refer this matter to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men for report;
- took note of the updated draft agenda.

10. On 18 March, the Standing Committee:

- heard a welcome address by Mr Bernard Schreiner, Chairperson of the French delegation to the Assembly, who also delivered a political message on behalf of Mrs Claudie Haigneré, Minister-delegate for European Affairs of France;
- heard a statement by Mr Jan Mans, Mayor of Enschede (the Netherlands), on the industrial accident which occurred in the city on 13 May 2000 when an explosion of a fireworks warehouse killed 18 persons;
- ratified the credentials of new members of the Assembly submitted by the delegations of Denmark, Latvia and Romania;
- ratified the changes in the composition of general Assembly committees in respect of the delegations of Denmark, Latvia and Romania;
- took note of the agenda adopted and the draft order of business drawn up by the Bureau for the April 2005 Part-Session of the Parliamentary Assembly (25-29 April 2005);
- took note of the information provided by the President on the decisions by the Bureau on the procedure for the election of the Commissioner for Human Rights;
- held an exchange of views on the observation of the parliamentary elections in Moldova (6 March 2005) by an ad hoc committee of the Bureau (Rapporteur: Mr Kvakkestad, Norway, EDG);
- decided to hold a debate under urgent procedure on the draft Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings, at the request of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men;
- postponed consideration of the report on "development challenges in Europe's islands" to the next Standing Committee meeting.

E. ADOPTED TEXTS

11. On 18 March, the Standing Committee adopted, on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly, the following texts:

Recommendation 1695 (2005)	on the draft Council of Europe Convention on action against trafficking in human beings;
Recommendation 1696(2005)	on Plans to set up a Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union;
Recommendation 1697 (2005)	on the European Federation of Research and Information Centres on Sectarism (FECRIS): request for consultative status with the Council of Europe;
Resolution 1426 (2005)	on the Candidates for the European Court of Human Rights;

Resolution 1427 (2005)	on Plans to set up a Fundamental Rights Agency of the European Union;
Resolution 1428 (2005)	on the Situation of the deported Meskhetian population;
Resolution 1429 (2005)	on Asylum seekers and irregular migrants in Turkey;
Resolution 1430 (2005)	on Industrial hazards;
Resolution 1431 (2005)	on the Initiation of a monitoring procedure and post-monitoring dialogue;
Resolution 1432 (2005)	on the Procedure for elections held by the Parliamentary Assembly other than those of its President and Vice-Presidents.

F. REFERENCES AND TRANSMISSIONS TO COMMITTEES

12. On 28 January, the Bureau approved the following proposals:

i. references:

- **Doc. 10425**
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Toshev and others
Beyond Kyoto: the second pillar in the fight against climate change – accumulation of carbon dioxide, to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for report*
- **Doc. 10426**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Pourgourides and others
Fair trial issues in criminal cases concerning espionage or divulging state secrets, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, *for report*
- **Doc. 10429**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Petrova-Mitevaska and others
Protection of endemic live fossils Ohrid trout species, to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, *for information*
- **Doc. 10430**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mrs Cliveti and others
The situation of women in the Southern Caucasus, to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, *for report*
- **Doc. 10434**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Rigoni and others
Europe's strong interest in rapid sustainable economic development in Ukraine, to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, *for report*

ii. modification of references:

- **Doc. 9708**
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Ragnarsdóttir and others
Strengthening the response to mental health needs in Europe
Ref. 2811 of 31/03/2003 – Validity: 31/03/2005, extended until 30 June 2005
- **Doc. 9715**
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Monfils and others
Social and health issues related to surrogate motherhood
Ref. 2815 of 31/03/2003 – Validity: 31/03/2005, extended until 30 June 2005

13. On 18 March, the Standing Committee:

i. ratified the following references and modifications of references proposed by the Bureau:

a. references to committees:

- Reference No. 3056** **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Severin and others on the Council of Europe and the promotion of democracy (Doc. 10436):** reference to the Political Affairs Committee *for report on the external relations of the Council of Europe;*
- Reference No. 3057** **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Pourgourides and others on the situation of the inhabitants of the Sovereign British Areas of Akrotiri and Dhekilia (Doc. 10441):** reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report at the Standing Committee;*
- Reference No. 3058** **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Goerens and others on implications for Europe of the economic rise of China (Doc. 10443):** reference to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development *for report;*
- Reference No. 3059** **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Wilkinson and others on the creation of transit centres outside the European Union (Doc. 10448):** reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population *for report,* and to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for opinion;*
- Reference No. 3060** **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Gubert and others on responsible foodstuffs consumption (Doc. 10459):** transmission to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development *for information;*
- Reference No. 3061** **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Lengagne and others on the 50th Anniversary of the Europe Prize-Stocktaking and outlook (Doc. 10460):** reference to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs *for report at the Standing Committee;*
- Reference No. 3062** **Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Pericleous-Papadopoulos and others on the need to reconcile work and family life (Doc. 10464):** reference to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for report;*
- Reference No. 3063** **Motion for a recommendation presented by Mrs Cliveti and others on the international day of equal opportunities for women and men (Doc. 10466):** transmission to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for information;*
- Reference No. 3064** **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Toshev and others on the European year of citizenship through education and its follow (Doc. 10468):** transmission to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education *for information;*

Reference No. 3065 **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Bindig and others on the Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing (Doc. 10469):** reference to the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population *for report on the Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements;*

Reference No. 3066 **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Pourgourides and others on improving CPT selection procedures (Doc. 10471):** reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report*, and to the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men *for opinion;*

Reference No. 3067 **Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Bruce and others on the follow-up to Resolution 1359 (2004) on political prisoners in Azerbaijan (Doc. 10473):** reference to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for report;*

b. extension of references:

Reference No. 2814 **Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Cekuolis and others on democratic oversight of the security sector in member States (Doc. 9712):** extended the validity of the reference to 30 April 2005 (Modification of Ref. No. 2814 of 31 March 2003);

Reference No. 2804 **Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Goulet and others on reducing sea pollution (Doc. 9700):** extended the validity of the reference until 31 May 2005 (Modification of Ref. No. 2804 of 31 March 2003);

ii. took note of the decision of the Bureau, as regards the Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Gross and others on evaluating the role of the Council of Europe during the presidential elections in Ukraine (Doc. 10444), to ask the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities to prepare a report for the attention of the Bureau;

iii. took note of the decision of the President, following consultation of the Bureau, to declare out of order the draft "Motion for a resolution on holding plenary debates on the annual report of the European Court of Human Rights", and invited its authors to reformulate it.

14. On 25 April, the Bureau approved the following proposals:

a. references:

- **Doc. 10481 revised**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr McNamara and others
Municipal elections in Latvia on 12 March 2005,

and

- **Doc. 10482**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Elo and others
Education reform and problems with observance of the national minorities' rights in Latvia, to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights *for one report on "the rights of national minorities in Latvia";*

- **Doc. 10488**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Gross and others
Guidelines for the status of the opposition in a democratic parliament, to the Committee on Rules of Procedure and Immunities, for a report on the "Procedural guidelines on the rights and duties of the opposition in a democratic parliament";
- **Doc. 10492**
Motion for a recommendation presented by Mr Marquet and others
The quality of medicines in Europe, to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, *for report*
- **Doc. 10499**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Jurgens and others
Cyprus: towards a resumption of talks on the basis of the "Annan Plan", to the Political Affairs Committee, to be taken into account in the preparation of the report on "the situation in Cyprus".

b. request to modify a reference:

- **Doc. 10459**
Motion for a resolution presented by Mr Gubert and others
Responsible foodstuffs consumption
Ref. no 3060 of 18 March 2005, to the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs *for report*, instead of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development for information.

G. MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE AND THE BUREAU IN MONACO

15. On 28 January, the Bureau decided to hold these meetings on Thursday 1 September 2005 instead of 9 September 2005.

H. RE-CONSTITUTION OF AD HOC COMMITTEES OF THE BUREAU

16. On 28 January, the Bureau reconstituted the following ad hoc committees:

- Ad hoc Committee of Chairpersons of Political Groups (Presidential Committee)
- Ad hoc Committee on the dialogue with the Parliament of Liechtenstein

I. LIECHTENSTEIN

❖ Dialogue with the Parliament of Liechtenstein:

17. On 18 March the Bureau:

- i. following a decision of the Monitoring Committee, appointed Mr Glesener member of the ad hoc committee for the dialogue with the Parliament of Liechtenstein in replacement of Mr Van den Brande;
- ii. appointed Mr Glesener Chairman of this ad hoc committee;
- iii. asked the President of the Assembly to write to the newly elected Speaker of the Parliament of Liechtenstein with a view to agreeing, in consultation with the Chairperson of the ad hoc committee of the Bureau, on the exact date for the start of this dialogue.

J. FOLLOW-UP TO RESOLUTION 1416 (2004) ON THE CONFLICT OVER THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH REGION DEALT WITH THE OSCE MINSK CONFERENCE

18. On 25 April, the Bureau approved the composition of the Ad Hoc Committee on the implementation of the Resolution 1416 (2004) on the conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region dealt with the OSCE Minsk Conference and appointed Lord Russell-Johnston as Chairman.

K. VISITS OF RAPORTEURS

19. On 28 January, the Bureau:

i. authorised Mr Lloyd (United Kingdom, SOC), Rapporteur of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights on "Serious human rights violations in Libya – Inhuman treatment of Bulgarian medical staff" to carry out a fact-finding visit to Libya, if necessary;

ii. authorised Mrs Vermot-Mangold (Suisse, SOC), Rapporteur of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men on "Disappearance and murder of a great number of women and girls in Mexico" to carry out a fact-finding visit in Mexico before the April part-session.

20. On 18 March, the Bureau, following a request by the Chairman of the Political Affairs Committee, authorised a fact-finding visit of Mr Margelov, rapporteur on the Middle East, to Israel, Jordan and Syria in April 2005.

L. COMPOSITION OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEE

21. On 28 January, the Bureau approved new members as proposed by the political groups for ratification by the Assembly.

22. On 25 April, the Bureau approved new members as proposed by the political groups for ratification by the Assembly.

M. INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

23. On 28 January, the Bureau appointed the following representatives for 2005:

- European Commission for Democracy through Law – Venice Commission: Mr Schieder (SOC) and Mr Jurgens (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights);
- Council on Democratic Elections (of the Venice Commission): Mrs Durrieu (SOC, Political Affairs Committee), Mr Jurgens (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) and Mr Van den Brande (EPP/CD, Monitoring Committee); and as substitutes: Mr Pourgourides (EPP/CD, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights) and Mr Kvakkestad (EDG, Monitoring Committee);
- European Centre for Global Interdependence and Solidarity – North-South Centre: Mr Schieder (SOC) and Mr Sasi (EPP/CD, Committee on Economic Affairs and Development);
- European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance – ECRI: Mr Cilevics (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), Mrs de Zulueta (SOC, Political Affairs Committee);
- Group of States against Corruption – GRECO: M. Bartumeu Cassany (SOC, Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights);
- European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice - CEPEJ: the President of the Assembly;
- Council of Europe Committee for Works of Art: Mr Legendre (EPP/CD, Chairperson of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education) and Mr O'Hara (SOC, Rapporteur of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education);

- Pan-European Federation for Heritage – Europa Nostra: Mr Zingeris (EDG, Committee on Culture, Science and Education);

N APPOINTMENTS OF ASSEMBLY REPRESENTATIVES FOR OFFICIAL ACTIVITIES

24. On 28 January, the Bureau appointed the following representatives:

- 2nd European Conference of Electoral Management Bodies organised by the Venice Commission with the assistance of the European Commission (10-11 February, Strasbourg): 3 members representing the Assembly in the Council on Democratic Elections (of the Venice Commission);
- Public event to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination organised by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) (21 March, Strasbourg): set up an ad hoc committee composed of five members of the Political Affairs Committee and five members of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights;
- Development and Aid in 2005: High-level Seminar for Donor-country Parliamentarians organised by the Parliamentary Network on the World Bank (27-28 February, Naples): Mr Jonas (Germany, SOC);
- 4th Winter meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (24-25 February, Vienna): M. Gardetto (Monaco, EPP/CD);
- 4th meeting of Cetinje Parliamentary Forum (27 February - 1 March, Cetinje): left it up to the President to appoint the Assembly representative;
- Parliamentary event on “Beyond Beijing: Towards gender equality in politics” organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (3 March, New York): Mrs Err (Luxembourg, SOC).

25. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- Fourth Conference on Security and Co-operation in the Mediterranean (Napflion, Greece, 6 and 8 February 2005): took note of a written report by Mr Azzolini;
- 4th Fourth annual winter meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (Vienna, 24-25 February 2005): took note of a written report by Mr Gardetto.

26. On 25 April, the Bureau:

i. took the following decisions on the Assembly representatives at different events:

- 9th Regional round table of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe (Sofia, 18 May 2005): Mr Severin (Romania, SOC) and Mr Toshev (Bulgaria, EPP/CD);
- 2005 Spring Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (Kyiv, 7-9 June 2005): asked the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development to appoint a representative;
- XXXI Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the French-speaking communities (Brussels, 6-9 July 2005): lift it up to the President to appoint a representative (without costs for the Assembly);
- 9th St Petersburg International Economic Forum (St Petersburg, 14-16 June 2005): asked the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development to appoint a representative;
- 2nd Barents Parliamentary Conference (Bodo (Norway), 29-30 June 2005): lift it up to the President to appoint a representative (without costs for the Assembly);

- 14th Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference (BSPC) (Vilnius, 28-30 August 2005): lift it up to the President to appoint a representative (without costs for the Assembly);

ii. Conference of the Chairmen of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Committees from the National Parliaments of the SEECF Participating States (Bucharest, 24-25 March 2005): took note of a written report by Mr Severin and referred it to the Political Affairs Committee for consideration.

O MEETINGS ELSEWHERE THAN IN STRASBOURG OR PARIS

27. On 28 January, the Bureau authorised the following meetings:

- Political Affairs Committee, Warsaw (Poland), 28 February -1 March 2005;
- Ad hoc sub-committee on the organisation of the Round Table on the political situation in the Chechen Republic (of the Political Affairs Committee), Moscow (Russia), 21 March 2005;
- Ad hoc sub-committee for the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Local and Regional Government (of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs), Budapest (Hungary), 24-25 February 2005;
- Sub-committee on Media (of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education, Kyiv (Ukraine), 9-11 March 2005;
- Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, Florence (Italy), 11 March 2005;
- Ad hoc sub-committee for the Hearing on "Immigration, Integration and Development" organised by the European Parliament (of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population), Brussels (Belgium), 14 March 2005;
- Ad hoc sub-committee on the Conference of European Ministers of Justice (of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights), Helsinki (Finland), 7-8 April 2005;
- Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Cyprus, 23-25 May 2005.

28. On 18 March, the Bureau:

i. authorised the following meetings:

- Sub-committee on External Relations (of the Political Affairs Committee), St.Petersburg (Federation of Russia), 14 April 2005;
- Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee, Budapest (Hungary) 20 May 2005;
- Sub-committee on Migration (of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population), Rome (Italy), 23-24 May 2005;
- Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, Santiago de Compostela (Spain), 1-2 July 2005;

ii. Sub-committee on Refugees (of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population), Baku (Azerbaijan), 1 July 2005: postponed its decision until 2005 April part-session.

29. On 25 April, the Bureau:

i. authorised the following meetings:

- Sub-Committee on Local and Regional Democracy (of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs), Lutsk (Ukraine), 15 – 16 September 2005;
- Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population, Almaty (Kazakhstan), 15 – 17 September 2005;

- Sub-Committee on the Cultural Heritage (of the Committee on Culture, Science and Education), Rostock (Germany), 12 – 13 September 2005;
 - Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe, Budapest (Hungary), 19 May 2005;
 - Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe, Antalya (Turkey), 7 – 8 September 2005.
- ii. postponed its decision until the next Bureau meeting on Friday 29 April for the following meetings and asked the committees concerned to discuss these requests during the part-session with a view of presentation a position to the Bureau:
- Political Affairs Committee, Baku (Azerbaijan) 3 – 4 July 2005;
 - Sub-Committee on Refugees (of the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population), Baku (Azerbaijan), 1 July 2005;
 - Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe, Baku (Azerbaijan), 5 July 2005;
- iii. did not authorise the following meeting:
- Committee on Culture, Science and Education, Prague (Czech Republic), 2 – 3 September 2005.

3. RELATIONS WITH OTHER BODIES OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

A. EUROPEAN COMMITTEE FOR THE PREVENTION OF TORTURE AND INHUMAN AND DEGRATING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT (CPT)

30. On 28 January, the Bureau, following the recommendations of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, drew up the lists of candidates to be forwarded to the Committee of Ministers in the following order:

- a. with regard to the Czech Republic: 1. Mr Zdeněk HÁJEK, 2. Mrs Jana MAREČEK, 3. Mr Michal BERAN;
- b. with regard to Latvia: 1. Mrs Ilvija PUCE, 2. Mr Vitolds ZAHARS, 3. Mr Uldis VEITS.

31. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- examined the list of candidates to be forwarded to the Committee of Ministers in respect of Albania;
- following the recommendation of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, drew up the list of candidates in the following order: 1. Mrs Mandra 2. Mr Braka 3. Mr Selmany.

B. COUNCIL OF EUROPE COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

❖ Timetable for the election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights:

32. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- i. was informed by Ambassador Landman about the Chairman's summing up following the discussion on "Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights – Procedure for election" at the 919th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies and held an exchange of views on this issue;

- ii. regretting that the Committee of Ministers was unable to respect the required deadline for the submission of candidates to the Assembly, proposed to the Assembly to hold this election during the October 2005 part-session;
- iii. asked the Committee of Ministers to open the procedure for election without further delay;
- iv. recalling that the current Commissioner, upon his election by the Assembly on 21 September 1999, was declared elected for a term of office which will last for six years from 1 January 2000, proposed to the Assembly that, in order to allow the newly elected Commissioner sufficient time to take up his/her functions, the term of office should start on 1 January 2006;
- v. decided to ask the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights to organise the interviews of candidates in September 2005.

33. On 25 April:

- the Bureau took note of the decision taken by the Ministers' Deputies at the 921st meeting on 30 March 2005 concerning the item on the timetable for the election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights;
- took note that the President will mention the question of the timetable for the election of the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights in his introductory statement and consequently agreed not to include this question as a formal item on the draft agenda of the Joint Committee of Thursday 28 April.

C. EUROPEAN COMMISSION AGAINST RACISM AND INTOLERANCE (ECRI)

- ❖ *Composition of the Ad Hoc Committee to participate in the conference on "Publiceven to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination" organised by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) (Strasbourg, 21 March 2005)*

34. On 18 March, the Bureau approved the composition of the ad hoc committee.

4. RELATIONS WITH OTHER INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

A. PARLIAMENTARY TROIKA ON THE STABILITY PACT

35. On 28 January, the Bureau approved the proposals for the activities during the 2005 Parliamentary Assembly's Chairmanship of the Troika.

B. CONFERENCE DEDICATED TO THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORY OF THE ANTI-HITLER COALITION IN WORLD WAR II (ST. PETERSBURG, 15 APRIL 2005)

36. On 28 January, the Bureau:

- i. approved the modalities of the Assembly's involvement in the organisation of this conference and set up an hoc committee to participate in it composed of 15 members on the basis of proposals to be made by the political groups (6 SOC, 4 EPP/CD, 2 LDR, 2 EDG and 1 UEL);
- ii. was informed about the proposals for the draft programme and the draft final declaration received from the CIS Inter-parliamentary Assembly and invited members to formulate their possible comments regarding these documents.

37. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- i. approved the composition of the ad hoc committee to participate in this Conference;

- ii. took note of the draft programme of the conference and agreed to propose that Mr Ateş chair Panel 1, Mr Iwinski co-chair Panel 2 and Mr Van den Brande co-chair Panel 3;
- iii. approved the amended version of the draft declaration to be transmitted by the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly to the Secretary General of the CIS IPA;
- iv. authorized the President of the Assembly to finalise the draft declaration with the President of the CIS IPA without making any substantial modifications to the text approved by the Bureau.

5. BUDGETARY QUESTIONS

A. BUDGET OF THE ASSEMBLY FOR 2006

38. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- i. following the proposal of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, proposed to the Assembly to hold the debate on the budgetary reports (on the budget of the Council of Europe as a whole and on that of the Assembly) in the Assembly after the Third Summit of the Council of Europe taking into account the Summit's decisions;
- ii. invited this Committee to consider the question of the Assembly's budget in the context of the Council of Europe's budget as a whole, taking into account the institutional balance, the statutory role of the Assembly within the Organisation and the cost effectiveness;
- iii. in this context, was informed by the President of the Assembly that the Secretary General of the Assembly has been asked by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe to make, by 31 March 2005, a proposal for the Assembly's budget for 2006 foreseeing efficiency savings of 2% in comparison to 2005 budget;
- iv. declared that it was against any reduction in the Assembly's 2006 budget and instructed the Secretary General of the Assembly to inform the Secretary General of the Council of Europe accordingly.

6. OBSERVATION OF ELECTIONS

A. PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN MOLDOVA (6 MARCH 2005)

39. On 28 January, the Bureau:

- i. approved the composition of the ad hoc Committee to observe these elections and took note of the dates for the pre-electoral mission, which will take place on 16-19 February 2005;
- ii. invited, in conformity with the cooperation agreement signed with the Venice Commission, an expert of the Venice Commission to join the observer delegation.

40. On 18 March, the Bureau approved and declassified the report of the ad hoc committee which observed the election.

B. OPINIONS OF THE VENICE COMMISSION FOLLOWING ELECTION OBSERVATION BY THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

41. On 18 March, the Bureau took note of the exchange of letters between Mr Jurgens, President of the Council for Democratic Elections, and the President of the Assembly, and stated that in conformity with the cooperation agreement between the Assembly and the Venice Commission, the Bureau can ask the Venice Commission for opinions on specific problems concerning the election legislation which were highlighted by the Assembly election observation mission.

C. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ASSEMBLY ELECTION OBSERVATION MISSIONS

42. On 18 March, the Bureau took note of the exchange of letters between Mr Jurgens, President of the Council for Democratic Elections, and the President of the Assembly and agreed to consider this matter in the wider context of the guidelines for election observation, which should be revised and presented to the Bureau at a next meeting.

D. PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN ALBANIA (JUNE-JULY 2005)

43. On 25 April, the Bureau:

- set up an Ad Hoc Committee to observe these elections composed of 30 members (d'Hondt system);
- decided that a pre-electoral mission will take place one month before the election at the latest, composed of five members, one from each political group who are at the same time members of the Ad Hoc Committee.

E. ELECTIONS TO THE PALESTINIAN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL (17 JULY 2005)

44. On 25 April, the Bureau:

- set up an Ad Hoc Committee to observe these elections composed of 30 members (d'Hondt system);
- decided that a pre-electoral mission will take place one month before the election at the latest, composed of five members, one from each political group who are at the same time members of the Ad Hoc Committee.

F. CONSTITUTIONAL REFERENDUM IN ARMENIA (SUMMER 2005)

45. On 25 April, the Bureau set up an Ad Hoc Committee to observe these elections composed of 10 members (3 SOC, 2 EPP/CD, 2 LDR, 2 EDG, 1 UEL).

G. PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN BULGARIA (25 JUNE 2005)

46. On 25 April, the Bureau:

- took note that Mr Passy, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, had sent a letter to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe inviting the Council of Europe to assess the need to send an observation mission to the parliamentary elections in Bulgaria;
- asked that the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly consult the Chairman of the parliamentary delegation of Bulgaria to the Assembly and agreed to come back to this matter at the meeting of the Bureau on Friday 29 April on the basis of this consultation.

7. OTHER MATTERS**A. EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF PARLIAMENTS IN 2006**

47. On 18 March, the Bureau:

- i. took note of the memorandum prepared by the Secretary General of the Assembly;
- ii. noted that, as a result of the consultations between the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly and the Secretaries General of the parliaments of the countries from which formal invitations had been received, it was announced already by Mr Schieder, former President of the Assembly, that the next Conference of Presidents of Parliaments will be held in Tallinn from 30 to 31 May 2006;

iii. welcomed the invitation from the Speaker of the Parliament of Finland to the participants at this Speaker's Conference to take part in the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the first parliamentary session of the Finnish parliament, which will take place on 1st June 2006 in Helsinki;

iv. agreed to the topic proposed by the President for this Conference, i.e. "Bridge-building through Parliamentary Diplomacy" and asked the President to transmit this proposal to the President of the Parliament of Estonia for consideration;

B. TIMETABLE FOR THE ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY

48. On 18 March, the Bureau took note of the memorandum by the Secretary General of the Assembly and approved the proposed timetable to be transmitted to the Committee of Ministers.

C. INFORMATION

49. On 28 January, the Bureau heard the information by the President of the Assembly and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and took note of the written communication of the Secretary General of the Parliamentary Assembly.

50. On 18 March, the Bureau took note of the information by the President of the Assembly, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Secretary General of the Assembly.

51. On 25 April, the Bureau took note of the information by the President of the Assembly, the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe and the Secretary General of the Assembly.

D. 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EUROPE PRIZE (2005)

52. On 18 March, the Bureau, following a request by the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs; decided to include the ceremony of the 50th anniversary of the Europe Prize on the draft order of business of the 2005 June-part session.

E. GRANTING OF THE TITLE OF HONORARY PRESIDENT

53. On 25 April, the Bureau granted the title of Honorary President to Mr Björck, former President of the Assembly.