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CORRIGENDUM

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F – 67075 Strasbourg Cedex, tel: +33 3 88 41 20 00, fax: +33 3 88 41 27 76, http://assembly.coe.int, e-mail: assembly@coe.int

9. Requests for urgent procedure

THE PRESIDENT. – Before we examine the draft order of business, the Assembly needs to consider the five requests for urgent procedure which have been made in accordance with Rule 50 of the Rules of Procedure. They are: "Freedom of the media in Russia"; "Alleged secret detentions in Council of Europe member states"; "Riots in European cities: lessons and Council of Europe response"; "Current situation in Belarus"; and the "Peril of using energy supply as an instrument of political pressure".

We will make separate decisions on each proposal in a few moments. First, I should inform the Assembly of the proposal of the Bureau on all these requests. The Bureau examined these requests on 9 January and this morning. It decided to support the request for a debate under urgent procedure on Belarus, under the title of "The situation in Belarus on the eve of the presidential election". This debate is proposed in the draft order of business for Thursday morning. It proposes that the subject of "Alleged secret detentions in Council of Europe member states" should be considered as a current affairs debate, rather than a debate under urgent procedure. It is proposed in the draft order of business that this debate should take place at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

On the other three requests for urgent procedure – "Freedom of the media in Russia", "Riots in European Cities" and "Peril of using energy supply as an instrument of political pressure" – the Bureau proposes that these should be referred to committees for report under the normal procedure, not under the urgent procedure.

The Assembly must now consider each request for urgent procedure in turn. The first request for urgent procedure is for a debate on "Freedom of the media in Russia". At its meeting on 9 January the Bureau decided not to recommend an urgent debate but to refer the matter to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education for report under the normal procedure.

Is the Bureau's proposal accepted?

The Bureau's recommendation is accepted, and the request for urgent procedure is therefore not approved. The matter will be referred to the Committee on Culture, Science and Education when the progress report is adopted.

We shall now consider the request for an urgent debate on "Alleged secret detentions in Council of Europe member states". The Bureau has proposed that, rather than an urgent procedure debate, a current affairs debate on this topic should be held on Tuesday morning.

Is the Bureau's proposal accepted?

The Bureau's recommendation is accepted, and the request for urgent procedure is therefore not approved.

We shall now consider the third request for an urgent debate on "Riots in European cities: lessons and Council of Europe response".

At its meeting on 9 January the Bureau decided not to recommend an urgent debate but to refer the matter to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee for report and the Committee on Migration, Refugees and Population and the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs for opinions under the normal procedure.

Is the Bureau's proposal accepted?

The Bureau's recommendation is accepted, and the request for urgent procedure is therefore not approved and the matter will be referred to the committees already mentioned when the progress report is adopted.

We shall now consider the request for an urgent debate on the "Current situation in Belarus". The Bureau approved this request.

Does the Assembly agree with the proposal of the Bureau that a debate on the situation in Belarus on the eve of the presidential election should be placed on the order of business with this modified title?

The Bureau's proposal is accepted, and the request for urgent procedure is therefore approved.

Following the usual practice of the Assembly which is to refer a question to only one committee for report under Rule 24, the Bureau has proposed that the matter of the "Current situation in Belarus" be referred to the Political Affairs Committee for report, and to the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights and the Committee on Culture, Science and Education for opinions.

Does the Assembly agree to these references?

These references are agreed to.

We shall now consider the request for an urgent debate on the "Peril of using energy supply as an instrument of political pressure".

At its meeting today the Bureau decided not to recommend an urgent debate but to refer the matter to the Political Affairs Committee for report, and to the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development for an opinion in the normal way.

Is the Bureau's proposal accepted?

Mr EÖRSI *(Hungary)*. – President and colleagues, according to several experts, the situation does not sound good, and the next war may break out because of the energy situation. This has been the biggest issue in European politics in January. All our citizens understand what is at stake, and they also understand that the situation is partly a political game. I am, of course, in favour of a normal report, but we all understand that in politics timing is of the essence.

If the Assembly does not provide a clear opinion on how we should deal with the energy problems, those who do not support an urgent debate should stop crying that this Assembly is not visible. I urge my colleagues to support an urgent debate on this issue.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you. There is an objection to the Bureau's proposal that there should not be an urgent procedure debate on the peril of using energy supply as an instrument of political pressure. Under Rule 50, the Assembly must now decide on the question of urgency. On the request for urgent procedure only the following may be heard: one speaker for the request and one person against, the chairperson of the committee concerned, in this case the Political Affairs Committee, and a representative of the Bureau speaking in its name. Who wishes to speak in favour of the request? Mr Eörsi has spoken in favour of the request.

Mr EÖRSI *(Hungary)*. – May I have one more minute? If we have a vision about the future, nothing can be more substantial than the energy supply in Europe. If we do not respond now, we can have a normal report, but of course we all understand politics. If we come up with a nice, balanced report, say, next October, nobody will listen any more. This is the proper time for Europeans to listen to what we want to say about this very big problem. We heard that the Bureau has to be careful and objective. How can we be careful and objective if we do not have a debate? I want the Assembly to be objective, careful, and focused on the future. Otherwise we say nothing, and that is the worst that we can do for Europe and for ourselves.

THE PRESIDENT. – Does anyone wish to speak against?

Mr VAN DEN BRANDE *(Belgium)*. – Like many colleagues, I understand Mr Eörsi's demand. However, we have to deepen the question to create a comprehensive report. This is a geopolitically important issue and we have to be aware of the political pressure as regards energy. I am in favour of having that comprehensive report, not an urgent debate. We should have a strong, well-argued report as soon as possible. I think that it is best to follow the suggestion of the Bureau.

THE PRESIDENT. – I call Mr Ateş, Chairperson of the Political Affairs Committee.

Mr ATEŞ *(Turkey)*. – Nobody can deny that this is a very important matter for all of us. I do not think that two days' preparation and an urgent debate give enough time to investigate the matter in depth. We should have a comprehensive report on this matter. It does not relate only to Gazprom, Russia and Ukraine; we have to look at it from a much more general angle, including other energy resource areas and policies. It is therefore necessary to have more time to investigate and to bring out a comprehensive report.

THE PRESIDENT. – I have already indicated the opinion of the Bureau, which was against the request and in favour of making a reference to the committee under the normal procedure.

The vote is open. I remind the Assembly that the decision requires a two-thirds majority.

The request is rejected.