

**STANDING
COMMITTEE**

162 SC 11 E
Original: English



NATO Parliamentary Assembly

SUMMARY

of the meeting of the Standing Committee
Ballroom, Melia Grand Hermitage Hotel
Golden Sands, Varna, Bulgaria

Friday 27 May 2011

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ATTENDANCE LIST

President	Karl A. LAMERS (Germany)
Vice-Presidents	Jean-Michel BOUCHERON (France)
	Petras AUSTREVICIUS (Lithuania)
	Hugh BAYLEY (United Kingdom)
Treasurer	Pierre Claude NOLIN (Canada)
Former Vice-Presidents	Assen AGOV (Bulgaria)
	Jane CORDY (Canada)
Secretary General	David HOBBS

MEMBERS AND ALTERNATE MEMBERS

Albania	<i>Not represented</i>
Belgium	<i>Not represented</i>
Bulgaria	Dobroslav DIMITROV
Canada	Raynell ANDREYCHUK
	Jane CORDY
Croatia	<i>Not represented</i>
Czech Republic	<i>Not represented</i>
Denmark	John Dyrby PAULSEN
Estonia	Marko MIHKELSON
France	Loïc BOUVARD
Germany	Karl A. LAMERS
	Ulla SCHMIDT
Greece	Vassilios TOGIAS
Hungary	Mihály BALLA
	Mátyás FIRTL
Iceland	Ragnheidur E. ARNADOTTIR
Italy	Sergio DE GREGORIO
Latvia	Imants LIEGIS
Lithuania	Petras AUSTREVICIUS
	Andrius MAZURONIS
Luxembourg	Norbert HAUPERT
	Marc ANGEL
Netherlands	Simon van DRIEL
Norway	Erna SOLBERG
	Marit NYBAKK
Poland	Marek OPIOLA
Portugal	José Luis ARNAUT
Romania	Sever VOINESCU-COTOI
Slovakia	<i>Not represented</i>
Slovenia	Branko GRIMS
Spain	Ramon ALEU
Turkey	Vahit ERDEM
United Kingdom	Sir Menzies CAMPBELL
	Lord JOPLING
United States	<i>Not represented</i>

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Defence and Security	Joseph A. DAY (Canada)
Economics and Security	Hugh BAYLEY (United Kingdom)
Political	Raynell ANDREYCHUK (Canada)
Science and Technology	Jan Arild ELLINGSEN (Norway)
Mediterranean and Middle East	Vahit ERDEM (Turkey)
Special Group	

SECRETARIES OF DELEGATION

Albania	<i>Not represented</i>
Belgium	Frans Van MELKEBEKE
Bulgaria	<i>Not represented</i>
Canada	<i>Not represented</i>
Croatia	<i>Not represented</i>
Czech Republic	Iva MASARIKOVA
Denmark	Flemming Kordt HANSEN
Estonia	Tania ESPE
France	Frédéric TAILLET (Assemblée nationale)
Germany	Claudia RATHJEN (Bundestag)
	Annemarie BÜRSCH (Bundesrat)
Greece	Vassiliki IOANNIDOU
Hungary	Károly TUZES
Iceland	Arna Gerdur BANG
Italy	Alessandra LAI
Latvia	Sandra PAURA
Lithuania	Snieguole ZIUKAITE
Luxembourg	Isabelle BARRA
Netherlands	Arjen WESTERHOFF
Norway	Henrik MALVIK
Poland	Michał GARGANISZ
Portugal	Patricia GRAVE
Romania	Irina BOJIN
Slovakia	<i>Not represented</i>
Slovenia	Tamara GRUDEN-PECAN
Spain	Mercedes ARAUJO
Turkey	Yesim USLU
United Kingdom	Jyoti CHANDOLA
United States	<i>Not represented</i>

ACCOMPANYING THE DELEGATIONS

Germany	Harald BERWANGER
	Ivonne BOLLOW
Italy	Pia CALIFANO
	Elena di PANCRAZIO
Poland	Natalia JASKIEWICZ
Spain	Josefina MENDEZ
United Kingdom	Sarah CRANDALL

INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

Andrius AVIZIUS
 Anne Laure BLEUSE
 Henrik BLIDDAL
 Sébastien BOTELLA
 Patrick BURY
 Helen CADWALLENDER
 Rebecca CHANDLER
 Paul COOK
 Youri CORMIER
 Christine HEFFINCK
 Michael HENNESSY
 Dominique GINS
 Dwight GRISWOLD
 Susan MILLAR
 Ruxandra POPA
 Ted REINERT

Daniela RICHTEROVA
Steffen SACHS
Svitlana SVYETOVA
Alex TIERSKY
Vincent VIVES
Claire WATKINS

INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF AUDITORS, NATO

Kirsten ALSTRUP
Véronique VAN MEERHAEGHE

1. Opening of the proceedings

The President opened the meeting at 14:00, welcomed the members and thanked the host for organizing this Spring Session.

Apologies had been received from the following members of the Standing Committee:

Leon BENOIT (Canada)
Helge Adam MOLLER (Denmark)
Josselin de ROHAN (France)
Eftychios DAMIANAKIS (Greece)
Bjorgvin SIGURDSSON (Iceland)
Hendrik Jan ORMEL (Netherlands)
Jadwiga ZAKRZEWSKA (Poland)
José LELLO (Portugal)
Juraj DROBA (Slovakia)
Mike TURNER (United States)

The President welcomed Mr Marko Mihkelson as the new head of the Estonian delegation.

2. Adoption of the draft Agenda [115 SC 11 E]

The draft agenda was adopted.

3. Adoption of the Summary of the Standing Committee Meeting held in Ponta Delgada, The Azores, Portugal, on Saturday 2 April 2011 [108 SC 11 E]

The summary of the previous Standing Committee meeting in Ponta Delgada was adopted.

4. Organization of the Plenary Sitting to be held on Monday 30 May 2011

The President outlined practical arrangements for the Plenary Sitting, which will this time be held on Monday, in line with the new shorter format for Assembly Sessions. He also underlined that the meeting would begin and end earlier than usual to allow delegates to depart Varna on the early afternoon flights. He reminded the Standing Committee of the exceptional presence of the Japanese delegation at the Session.

5. Assembly Activities and Subjects in 2011 [122 SC 11 E]

- **Information document on NATO's Lisbon Summit Decisions and their Implementation [123 SC 11 E]**

The **Secretary General, David Hobbs**, presented an overview of the Assembly priorities for 2011 and the measures taken to adapt Assembly activities following the decisions taken by the Standing Committee in the Azores. One was the preparation of the Information Document on NATO's Lisbon Summit Decisions and their Implementation [123 SC 11 E]. The Assembly had put a lot of time and energy into preparing its contribution to NATO's new Strategic Concept. The information document provided a useful update on progress being made in implementing the decisions taken at NATO's Summit in Lisbon in November 2010.

Afghanistan remained at the top of the Assembly's priorities in 2011. In addition, in response to developments in North Africa and the Middle East, the Assembly's agenda had been substantially and effectively adapted to reflect a new focus on the "Arab Spring" and NATO's operations in Libya. As requested by the Danish delegation and directed by the Standing Committee, more attention would be given to the issue of piracy. Similarly, the issue of gender and security would feature more prominently on the Assembly's agenda. Nuclear safety would be addressed through a speaker in the Science and Technology Committee at the Varna Session and an address by a Japanese delegate. A meeting of the Georgia-NATO Interparliamentary Council was being planned in Brussels towards the end of the year, and developments in Belarus were being discussed in a report by the Political Committee.

The Secretary General also informed members of the Standing Committee that since no invitation had been forthcoming for the parliamentary elections in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Assembly would not be participating in the international election monitoring mission for these elections.

The Secretary General reminded delegates that the calendar of activities for 2011 included a total of 39 activities, down from 47 in 2010 thanks to a higher number of joint activities. Only five of those were open to associate members, down from nine in 2010. This trend had to be monitored carefully as the Assembly has flourished on engaging partners in its activities. At the same time, there were some indications that participation by associate members in Assembly activities had suffered from the financial crisis. A document reviewing these trends would be presented to the Standing Committee at the Annual Session.

Hugh Bayley (UK) supported the holding of joint activities, which allowed members of different committees to share views.

Lord Jopling (UK) repeated the call he had made in the Azores for more attention to be paid to the growing challenge connected with refugee flows.

The President supported Lord Jopling's proposal, and noted that the Chairperson of the Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security had agreed to put this issue on the Committee's agenda.

Senator Sergio de Gregorio (IT) also agreed with Lord Jopling about the importance of this issue, and suggested the Italian Minister of Interior could address the Assembly at the Annual Session in Bucharest. He detailed preparations for the meeting of the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group in La Maddalena, where the Arab Spring would feature high on the agenda. He also reported about his exchanges with Iranian officials, in which they had expressed an interest in dialogue with the Assembly. Finally, he asked the President to consider organizing a visit to Iraq in connection with the withdrawal of US troops in the country.

The President noted that such a visit, should it be envisaged, would need time and careful preparations.

Erna Solberg (NO) informed members of the Standing Committee about preparations for the Rose-Roth Seminar to be held in Tromsø on 22-24 June focusing on the High North, and encouraged delegates to participate.

Dobroslav Dimitrov (BG) welcomed delegates to Varna, and stressed the high level of attention in the media for this meeting, including in particular discussions on missile defence.

*

Turkey recognises the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

6. Update on the participation of the Delegation from the Russian Federation in Assembly activities [124 SC 11 E]

The President outlined the new arrangement which the Standing Committee had agreed at its meeting in the Azores for deciding upon the participation of the Russian delegation in Committee and Sub-Committee meetings. He noted that of the five meetings in which Russian participation had been considered, three had been open, and two had been closed. (Since document [124 SC 11 E] had been prepared, it had been decided that the planned visit of the Science and Technology to Spain in September would be open to Russian participation.)

Sir Menzies Campbell (UK) inquired whether the President's letter to the Heads of delegation of the Russian Federation had received a response. The President responded that there had been no formal response but a bilateral meeting with the Russian Delegation had been scheduled during the Varna Session.

Senator Raynell Andreychuk (CA) suggested a re-consideration of the format of the NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee (NRPC) with a view to engaging a broader segment of Russia's Parliament and civil society in Russia. The President supported the suggestion of a broader engagement with Russian parliamentarians and civil society representatives.

The Treasurer warned however that the prospect of changing the format of the NRPC was a sensitive issue for the Russian delegation and had led to difficult discussions in the past. He suggested the President should raise this with the Russian delegation at his meeting with them, to which Ms Andreychuk retorted that this should first be discussed internally.

Assen Agov (BG) suggested that the proposed presidential visit to Moscow should include meetings with independent experts and members of civil society. The President confirmed this was his intention, and that he would make this clear to the Russian delegation.

7. Application from the Senate of the Republic of Indonesia for Parliamentary Observer Status [125 SC 11 E]

The President outlined the bicameral nature of the Indonesian parliament, and explained that, following a meeting with the Indonesian Ambassador in Brussels, the Secretary General's recommendation was to wait until both houses of Parliament request observer status. The President endorsed this recommendation, suggesting that a letter should be sent to the Indonesian Parliament advising them that a request for observer status would need to be supported by both chambers of Parliament.

The Standing Committee agreed with the President's proposed approach.

8. Enhancing the Assembly's profile and public outreach [068 SC 11 E bis]

The President described the Assembly's efforts to raise its profile, including a popular website, a new Facebook presence, press releases and statements on visits, and events open to the press. He also briefed the Committee on the recent visits he had paid to Lithuania and Estonia, which had included several high-profile events as well as exchanges with students. He called for a concrete plan to use Assembly activities to enhance public awareness and understanding of NATO and of the Assembly. The President also suggested making a short, lively film about the Assembly and its activities. He encouraged delegates to put forward ideas for making Assembly activities more visible.

Petras Austrevicius (LT) thanked the President for his public presentations in Lithuania, confirming that they had been helpful in raising the Assembly's profile. He informed members of

the Committee of the Lithuanian delegation's practice of holding a press conference following each Assembly Session to report on discussions held on those occasions.

Mr Bayley recalled the Assembly's contribution to the new Strategic Concept and noted that the Assembly's recommendation of improving NATO's public relations strategy had not been included in NATO's document. He invited the President to bring this issue to NATO's attention at the next opportunity, and encourage NATO to make more frequent reference in its public diplomacy efforts to the role of parliamentarians in the Alliance. Mr Bayley also suggested adding links from the members' websites back to the Assembly website. Finally, he endorsed the suggestion that national delegations report to the Secretariat for further dissemination of their own efforts in raising the Assembly's profile.

Marc Angel (LU) also endorsed these proposals, suggesting that best practices could be established and disseminated back to delegations. Reaching out to associate parliaments and learning from their experience was also important, he stressed.

Loïc Bouvard (FR) suggested the distribution of an electronic newsletter by the Assembly Secretariat to decision-makers.

The President endorsed these suggestions, and encouraged members to let the Secretariat know about their activities in relation to their membership of the Assembly, so these could be further advertised. He also reminded the Committee that he had previously called for the establishment of a NATO Day, and that that suggestion had been warmly received by many governments and parliaments. He requested the members' assistance in promoting this idea.

9. Finance

- **Draft Report by the Treasurer on the Results of the Financial Year 2010 and of the Current Financial Year [116 FIN 11 E]**
- **Report of the NATO Board of Auditors on the Financial Audit of the Accounts of the NATO PA for the Financial Year 2010 [117 FIN 11 E] presented by Kirsten Astrup, Member of the International Board of Auditors for NATO**
- **Letter of Representation [032 SC 11 E]**
- **Statement on Internal Controls [031 SC 11 E]**
- **Audited Financial Statements at 31 December 2010 [030 FIN 11 E bis]**
- **Audited Provident Fund Financial Statements for 2010 [050 FIN 11 E]**
- **Draft budget for 2012 [118 FIN 11 E]**

The Treasurer introduced and thanked Kirsten Astrup, Member of the International Board of Auditors at NATO, and invited her to present her report on the audit of the Assembly's finances.

Ms Astrup confirmed that the Board was able to issue an unqualified opinion on the financial statements. An unqualified opinion meant that the financial statements presented fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of the NATO PA, and that the organization's finances were in compliance with the financial regulations. Issues that were raised in previous audits had been resolved. Ms Astrup also stated that the Board did not raise any observations in this year's audit report but had received a letter from the NATO PA pointing to a recurrent issue regarding the lack of a formal international status that they believed could complicate any legal issue. Ms Astrup thanked the Treasurer and the International Secretariat for their co-operation in the conduct of the audit.

Mr Nolin presented the draft budget to be adopted in October in Bucharest. He called for a 1.5% increase, noting that inflation in Belgium was projected to be 2.5% in 2011. The Assembly had accumulated reserves over the past years that would allow for this limited increase in the budget.

However, he said that the draft would be reviewed before Bucharest and encouraged delegates to let him know of any difficulties they were facing.

The financial documents, with the exception of the draft budget, were adopted.

10. Future sessions and meetings

- **Early Spring Standing Committee meeting in 2012**
- **Distribution of Assembly Sessions and Standing Committee Meetings [063 SC 11 E rev. 1]**
- **Sessions and Meetings from 2011 [057 GEN 11 E rev. 1]**
- **57th Annual Session, Bucharest, Romania, 7 - 10 October 2011 [055 SESA 11 E]**

The President explained that Luxembourg had stepped in to host the Assembly's Spring Session in 2013, but that a host still needed to be found for the early spring Standing Committee in 2012.

Branko Grims (SL) confirmed that the Slovenian Parliament was in the process of agreeing to host the early spring Standing Committee of the Assembly in 2012. The first step of this process had already been concluded successfully, and Mr Grims was confident that final approval would be secured shortly.

Mr de Gregorio informed members that Italy would also be glad to host the 2012 early spring Standing Committee, since it unfortunately had had to cancel its offer to host the 2013 Annual Session.

Mr Bouvard also noted that the French delegation would be ready to host the 2012 early spring Standing Committee in Paris should the Slovenian and Italian offers not come through.

Marko Mihkelson (EE) presented a brief video of Tallinn and outlined the plans for the 2012 Spring Session.

11. Miscellaneous

The President paid tribute to Vahit Erdem, former Vice-President of the Assembly, Head of the Turkish delegation and Chairman of the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group, who was in Varna for his last session with the Assembly. He thanked Mr Erdem for his outstanding contribution to the Assembly over the years. Mr Erdem thanked members of the Standing Committee for their tribute. It had been a real pleasure to serve in the Assembly for all these years.

The meeting closed at 16:00.
