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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The report begins by reviewing the Assembly's 2011 programme and assessing the experience thus far in holding a higher proportion of meetings jointly in order to reduce the overall number of activities when compared to previous years. It notes that although few problems have occurred, one difficulty has been the heavy burden placed on delegations hosting seminars which have been preceded or followed by separate Sub-Committee programmes. Proposals for 2012 have therefore not included any joint activities bringing together seminar and Sub-Committee programmes.
2. The report then presents the list of report subjects and activities being proposed for 2012. It notes that these would place an understandably strong emphasis on developments in the Middle East and North Africa, but that other key priorities such as NATO operations, "post-Lisbon, pre-Chicago" NATO adaptation, partnerships and regional security – still feature strongly.
3. The proposals also incorporate the issues identified by the Standing Committee in meetings earlier this year – migrations and refugee flows, maritime piracy, and nuclear safety.
4. The overall number of activities for 2012 is projected to be at a similar level to 2011 – around 40 activities overall – a decrease compared with earlier years. As in 2011, this would be achieved by holding a higher proportion of activities jointly.
5. The approval of the Standing Committee is sought for the overall "package" of proposed report topics and activities – which might be modified during the Co-ordination Meeting taking place at the beginning of the Bucharest Session – bearing in mind that certain aspects cannot be fully defined at the moment. For instance, plans to visit countries in the Middle East and North Africa cannot be laid down in detail for obvious reasons in such a fluid environment. Nor can dates for certain activities be specified so far in advance (bearing in mind that the 2011 Autumn Session is taking place earlier than in some years).
6. The report therefore notes that the Standing Committee meeting in Slovenia in late March 2012 should be used as an opportunity for a particularly thorough review of plans.
7. Even so, in keeping with standard practice, certain specific proposals are singled out for attention because they fall outside the regular pattern of activities and in some cases could raise certain political sensitivities.

I. INTRODUCTION

8. One of Standing Committee's main tasks during Annual Sessions is to review all the subjects and activities being proposed for the forthcoming year to ensure that they reflect the Assembly's priorities and that the overall "package" is manageable, coherent, and realistic in terms of the demands upon members' time and the resources of national delegations and the International Secretariat. In terms of process, the International Secretariat goes as far as it can to ensure coherence, but only the Assembly's members – and specifically the Standing Committee – can decide whether the subjects and activities are politically appropriate.

9. In order to assist in making that judgement, all proposals are first discussed in a Co-ordination Meeting at the Assembly's Autumn Session which involves the Assembly's Bureau as well as representatives from all Committees, Sub-Committees etc. As Committees and Sub-Committees draw up their programmes independently from each other, Co-ordination Meetings can also help "deconflict" and even build synergies between different Assembly activities where necessary.

10. The recommendations emerging from the Co-ordination Meeting are then presented to the Standing Committee which has the final say on planned activities and subjects.

11. It will not be easy to finalize the 2012 proposed list of activities and subjects during the Bucharest Session. The session takes place much earlier than in other years, so 2012 is further away and there has been less time for those responsible to discuss their ideas for activities and subjects.

12. Before looking at proposals for 2012, it is worth briefly reviewing certain aspects of the activities which took place in 2011 and mentioning a few of those activities which will take place after the session and before the end of the year.

II. ACTIVITIES IN 2011

13. At its all-day meeting in The Azores, Portugal, in April, the Standing Committee updated the proposed work programme for the Assembly for 2011 to take into account several major events, including decisions from NATO's Summit in Lisbon and political developments in the MENA region. The outcome was the clear identification of priority areas and special areas of interest, which could be summarised as follows:

- a) NATO operations with an obvious central emphasis on Afghanistan
- b) implementation of the Alliance's new Strategic Concept and the Lisbon Summit decisions
- c) ongoing developments in the MENA region and their implications for international security
- d) NATO partnerships – both national and with other international organizations
- e) the impact of the financial and economic crisis on the resources available for defence in terms of operations and procurement
- f) regional security issues, with key themes being the South Caucasus – particularly the situation in Georgia - the Western Balkans, and the High North.

14. The Assembly's programme for 2011 includes 39 activities, compared with 47 in both 2009 and 2010. This is in line with the Standing Committee guidance based on the concerns of many delegations about the difficulties of participating in Assembly activities in the face of budget restraints and public perception of parliamentary travel.

15. The number of activities was reduced by conducting many of them jointly so that no one Assembly body experienced a decrease in its activities.

16. Joint activities, of course, have their pros and cons. One natural concern is that the number of participants could be too large, posing logistical difficulties and changing the character of the meetings. Another problem could be to produce a common programme to suit different Committees or Sub-Committees. On the other hand, joint meetings "decongest" the Calendar so there are fewer clashes, and they cut administrative overheads such as interpretation.

17. In practice, oversubscription has only been a problem in one case; the joint DSC and PC visit to China where the number of places was limited by the hosts. That said, in contrast with previous years, in 2011, no meetings have (so far) come close to cancellation due to potentially low participation.

18. One difficulty which has emerged, however, concerns combined seminar and Sub-Committee programmes. The problem is that it has proved to be very burdensome for the host delegation to organize an additional programme for the relevant Sub-Committee either immediately before or after the seminar, particularly in cases where the visit takes place in a different city or cities to that of the seminar. The obvious alternative is for the relevant Sub-Committee to simply participate in the seminar, without requesting any supplementary programme. However, there could be divergent views on this. While, on the one hand, this formula might facilitate the participation of certain delegations to seminars (by labelling the event as also a Sub-Committee activity), on the other, Sub-Committees might see this as "losing" one of their activities. In any event, there is no doubt about the difficulties sequential programmes impose on host delegations so these do not feature in proposals for 2012.

19. Crucially, holding a higher proportion of joint meetings has not seemed to require major compromises on the substance of any activity. There is enough overlap in interests to provide ample scope for joint activities.

20. Of course, 2011 is far from over, so before looking at proposals for 2012, it is worth mentioning some of the activities still forthcoming for this year. These include;

- the first visit to Russia since 2006 (the Bureau will visit Moscow from 1 to 2 November)
- the first ever visit to Djibouti (the GSM and PCNP in mid-November),
- the Rose-Roth Seminar in London from 21 to 22 November which will focus on the critically important issue of transition in Afghanistan
- the Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum from 6 to 7 December, a key opportunity to discuss transatlantic security issues with leading members of the Washington-based policy community.
- a second visit to Afghanistan
- a visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina by the CDS and ESCEW in late October

21. It is worth elaborating a little more on the Rose-Roth Seminar on transition in Afghanistan. This will take place in London, UK, over one and half days and will be followed by half-day meeting for member delegations only. This will look at the implications and lessons of the Alliance's involvement in Afghanistan in terms of future Alliance cohesion and solidarity. (After this Seminar and special half-day meeting, the DSCTC will remain in the United Kingdom for its own three-day programme.)

22. This Rose-Roth Seminar, incidentally, has attracted the largest participation of member delegates in the history of the Rose-Roth programme.

III. SUBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES IN 2012

23. Developing a programme for the forthcoming year is always a challenge, but it is even more so when the key decision point – the Annual Session – is early, as is the case in Bucharest. Nevertheless, the proposed subjects and activities for 2012 remain broadly in line with the list of priorities identified by the Standing Committee in the Azores, adjusted to take into account ongoing developments and forthcoming major events. The proposed work programme for 2012 thus revolves around the following main themes:

- the Middle East and North Africa
- NATO operations
- “post-Lisbon, pre-Chicago” NATO adaptation, including the impact of the prolonged financial and economic crisis
- Partnerships and regional security issues

24. The 2012 programme also incorporates the issues singled out by the Standing Committee at its meetings in the Azores and in Varna for additional emphasis, namely migrations and refugee flows in the Mediterranean, maritime piracy, and nuclear safety and security following the nuclear incidents in the wake of the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in March 2011.

25. This breakdown of themes is inevitably somewhat arbitrary. For instance: aspects of MENA-related work could be categorized under “partnerships”, or even Alliance adaptation. As a result, many proposed report subjects and activities are relevant to several priority themes. Consequently, it would be repetitive to present each priority and demonstrate in minute detail how each item on the lists of proposed report topics and activities would be addressed.

26. Such a listing would also overlook much of the substantive work that the Assembly will conduct in 2012. Many issues are addressed in varying levels of detail through activities such as seminars, Committee meetings at Sessions, Sub-Committee visits, the joint Committee meetings in Brussels each February and the Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum. Thus, the elaboration of key themes serves as a useful broad basis for ensuring that priority issues are addressed, and for identifying unnecessary duplication, possible oversights, and any misplaced emphasis in the lists of proposed reports and activities.

27. The remainder of this section therefore presents the current proposals for 2012's activities and report topics, and then briefly shows how these relate to the headline priorities listed above.

28. Table 1 presents the list of reports to be prepared by the Committees and the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group in 2012. Table 2 presents a key to the abbreviations used in this document.

29. Table 3 presents the list of activities for each Assembly body and programme. However, this breakdown means that joint activities are listed more than once. For instance, the joint Committee meetings in Brussels in February are listed for the DSC, the ESC and PC. Consequently, it is useful to present a chronological listing – even with a large “TBC” group – to provide a better impression of the number of activities actually being proposed for 2012. This chronological listing – a draft Calendar of Activities for 2012 – appears as Table 4

Table 1 - Proposed Report Subjects for 2012

Committee/ Sub- Committee	Report Subject	Report Type
CDS	Democracy in the MENA Region	General
CDS	Illegal Migration or Balkans related	Special
CDS/DG	Russia/North Caucasus	
DSC	Afghanistan: the future international military presence/partnership	General
DSC/FC	Piracy	
DSC/TC	Post Lisbon Alliance Adaptation: Capabilities, Reform, Lessons from Libya	
ESC	Economic Crisis and the Defence Resources Challenge	General
ESC	NATO report on national defence budgets and contributions to operations	Special
ESC/TER	Arctic Economic Opportunities, Environmental Obligations and Security Stakes or Fossil Fuels and New Dynamics	
ESC/EW	The Arab Spring: Economic Dimensions and Challenges	
PC	The Arab Spring: Implications for Euro-Atlantic Security	General
PC/NP	Afghanistan; Implications for Regional Security	
PC/TR	Challenges to Alliance Cohesion	
STC	Cyber Security or Unmanned Military Systems and their Implications	General
STC	Climate Change and the High North	Special
STC/EES	Nuclear Energy after Fukushima	
GSM	The Arab Spring: Consolidating the Revolutions	

Table 2 - Key to Abbreviations used

CDS	Committee on the Civil Dimension of Security
CDS/DG	Sub-Committee on Democratic Governance
DSC	Defence and Security Committee
DSC/FC	Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities
DSC/TC	Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security
ESC	Economics and Security Committee
ESC/TER	Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic Relations
ESCEW	Sub-Committee on East-West Economic Co-operation
PC	Political Committee
PCTR	Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations
PCNP	Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships
STC	Science and Technology Committee
STC/EES	Sub-Committee on Energy and Environmental Security
GSM	Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group
SEM	Rose-Roth Seminar
NPP	New Parliamentarians Programme
FOR	Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum
PTP	Parliamentary Training Programme
UNIC	Ukraine-NATO Inter-parliamentary Council
GNIC	Georgia-NATO Inter-parliamentary Council
NRPC	NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee
SPE	Special Event
TBC	To be confirmed

Table 3. Activities by Category

Abbreviation	Locations	Meeting Name	MonthName
SC	Ljubljana	Standing Committee Meeting	March
CDS	Tunisia or Egypt	CDS and ESCEW	Dates TBC
CDS/DG	Russia	CDSDG and DSCFC	April / May TBC
CDS/DG	Kosovo or Italy	CDSDG	Dates TBC
DSC	United States	DSC	January
DSC	Brussels	Joint Committee Meetings	February
DSC/FC	Russia	CDSDG and DSCFC	April / May TBC
DSC/FC	Germany	DSCFC and PCTR	September TBC
DSC/TC	France	DSCTC	March TBC
DSC/TC	Djibouti, US 5th Fleet (Bahrain), and Diego Garcia	DSCTC	October
ESC	Brussels	Joint Committee Meetings	February
ESC	France	ESC OECD	February
ESC/EW	Egypt or Tunisia	ESCEW and GSM	October
ESC/EW	Tunisia or Egypt	CDS and ESCEW	Dates TBC
ESC/TER	Svalbard (Norway)	ESCTER and STC	May
ESC/TER	Iceland	ESCTER	September
PC	Brussels	Joint Committee Meetings	February
PC/NP	Pakistan	PCNP	Dates TBC
PC/NP	Qatar and Bahrain (or Kuwait)	PCNP	Dates TBC
PC/TR	Washington DC	PCTR and STC	Dates TBC
PC/TR	Germany	DSCFC and PCTR	September TBC
STC	Svalbard	ESCTER and STC	May
STC	Washington DC	PCTR and STC	Dates TBC
STC	United Kingdom	STC	Dates TBC
GSM	Egypt or Tunisia	ESCEW and GSM	October
GSM	Location TBC	GSM and Rose-Roth Seminar	Dates TBC
GSM	Italy	GSM Seminar	Dates TBC
NRPC	Tallinn	NRPC	May
NRPC	Prague	NRPC	November
UNIC	Kiev	UNIC	Dates TBC
UNIC	Brussels	UNIC	Dates TBC
GNIC	TBC	GNIC TBC	Dates TBC
SEM	Azerbaijan	Rose-Roth Seminar	March/April TBC
SEM	Montenegro	Rose-Roth Seminar	June TBC
SEM	Location TBC	GSM and Rose-Roth Seminar	Dates TBC
FOR	Washington DC	Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum	December
NPP	Brussels	New Parliamentarians Programme	June
STP	Brussels	Parliamentary Training Programme 1	Dates TBC
STP	Brussels	Parliamentary Training Programme 2	Dates TBC
SES	Tallinn	Spring Session	May
SES	Prague	Annual Session	November
PRE	TBC	Presidential Visits	Dates TBC
SPE	Afghanistan	Afghanistan	Dates TBC

Table 4. 2012 Draft Calendar of Activities

January		
TBC	United States	DSC United States
February		
19-21	Brussels	Joint Committee Meetings
22-22	France	ESC OECD
March		
TBC	France	DSCTC France
31-1	Ljubljana	Standing Committee Meeting
May		
TBC	Svalbard (Norway)	ESCTER and STC Svalbard
20-21	Chicago	NATO Summit (President only)
25-25	Tallinn	NRPC
25-28	Tallinn	Spring Session
June		
TBC	Brussels	New Parliamentarians Programme
TBC	Montenegro	Rose-Roth Seminar Montenegro
September		
TBC	Germany	DSCFC and PCTR Germany
TBC	Iceland	ESCTER Iceland
October		
TBC	Djibouti, US 5th Fleet (Bahrain), and Diego Garcia	DSCTC Djibouti, US 5th Fleet (Bahrain), and Diego Garcia
TBC	Egypt or Tunisia	ESCEW and GSM Egypt or Tunisia
November		
9-9	Prague	NRPC
9-13	Prague	Annual Session
December		
TBC	Washington DC	Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum
Dates TBC		
March or April	Russia	CDSDG and DSCFC Russia
March or April	Azerbaijan (TBC)	Rose-Roth Seminar Azerbaijan
TBC	Tunisia or Egypt	CDS and ESCEW Tunisia or Egypt
TBC	Balkans (to include Kosovo)	CDSDG Balkans (to include Kosovo)
TBC	Pakistan	PCNP Pakistan
TBC	Qatar and Bahrain (or Kuwait)	PCNP Qatar or Bahrain (or Kuwait)
TBC	Washington DC	PCTR and STC Washington DC
TBC	United Kingdom	STC United Kingdom
TBC	Italy	GSM Seminar Italy
TBC	Location TBC	GSM and Rose-Roth Seminar (Location TBC)
TBC	Brussels	UNIC Brussels
TBC	Kiev	UNIC Kiev
TBC	TBC	GNIC TBC
TBC	Brussels	Parliamentary Training Programme 1
TBC	Brussels	Parliamentary Training Programme 2
TBC	TBC	Presidential Visits
TBC	Afghanistan	Afghanistan

A. THE MEDITERRANEAN AND THE MIDDLE EAST

30. One obvious feature of the proposals for 2012 is a heavy emphasis on the Middle East and North Africa. This is hardly surprising in view of the profound significance of events which began in early 2011 and which are still running their various courses.

31. Three Committees (the CDS, the ESC and PC) and the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group propose reports looking at specific aspects of the "Arab Spring", and these seem complementary in nature. The different aspects would be: democracy in the MENA region; economic aspects and challenges; implications for Euro-Atlantic Security; and consolidating the revolutions. Also related would be a DSC report which would include a section on the lessons learned from NATO's Libya-related operations.

32. The MENA region also features prominently in proposed activities for 2012. Proposals include visits to Tunisia, Egypt, and either Qatar or Bahrain. In addition, two Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group seminars are proposed.

33. A few observations about these proposals are in order. There are obvious uncertainties about organizing visits to certain parts of the MENA region. Tunisia and Egypt, for instance, will elect their first "post-revolution" parliaments later this year. However, it is not possible to foresee when the new parliaments will become properly functional, nor what their priorities will be. Consequently, proposals to visit Tunisia and Egypt seem eminently sensible, but it would be worth granting the relevant Assembly bodies the flexibility to adapt their plans in the light of future developments. For instance, should the new parliaments in Tunisia and Egypt be unable to host a visit for any reason, one suggestion could be to consider visits to other locations which have not experienced revolutions but have begun programmes of democratic reform, with obvious examples being Morocco and Jordan.

34. In approving the current choice of locations, it should be taken for granted that it might be necessary to switch locations and visit other MENA countries which are embarking on democratic reforms. In such cases, approval would be sought from the Bureau if the issue had to be decided before the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

35. With that clarification, one such visit is proposed jointly by the GSM and ESCEW, and another jointly by the CDS and the ESCEW.

36. The PCNP also plans to visit the Gulf region and is considering Qatar, Bahrain and Kuwait as possible locations. This Sub-Committee has a long-standing interest in contacts with the Gulf region and over the last several years has visited all the Gulf states apart from Iran, Iraq and Kuwait. However, it is important to note that although the proposed locations have much in common, there are also significant differences. Qatar, for instance, has seen little or no unrest and provided active political and military support for Operation Unified Protector. Kuwait has seen relatively small demonstrations against the government. Bahrain, on the other hand, while an important regional actor and host to the United States 5th fleet, dealt harshly with demonstrations in February and concerns are still being raised about the conduct of trials stemming from those events. Careful thought should therefore be given to choosing among the locations. The Assembly is among the many bodies which have expressed strong support for the aspirations of peoples of the region for democratic change, and it is very difficult to judge how a visit could be portrayed or perceived domestically and abroad.

37. With respect to all the proposed visits to the MENA region, it is worth recalling that in 2007 the Standing Committee agreed that officers of the Mediterranean Special Group¹ and the

¹ Subsequently re-titled the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group

Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships should participate in each other's meetings when relevant to their interests in order to ensure continuity and coherence. It might be useful to extend that formula to allow officers of the GSM to participate in any Committee-related visits to the MENA region. Although this would place something of a burden on those officers, such an arrangement would facilitate a consistent approach to the region and could be reviewed after a year, for instance.

38. Mention must also be made of potential Presidential visits. These are – obviously – at the discretion of the President and have the particular advantage of being able to take place at relatively short notice and at high level but without the on-site preparations and facilities associated with larger Assembly activities. In this way, for instance, the President has recently visited Tunisia in order to get a first-hand impression of the situation in the run-up to the elections for a constituent assembly on 23 October. This type of visit might also be the most appropriate means for initial engagement with the leaders emerging following popular uprisings elsewhere in the MENA region, an obvious example being Libya.

39. The Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM) remains at the forefront of the Assembly's engagement with the MENA region. The GSM's normal practice is to hold three activities each year consisting of one visit to a partner country and two seminars (one of which is generously hosted and organized by the Italian delegation)². This same formula is being proposed for 2012 but with a significant difference for the second seminar which would focus on promoting cooperation between the Assembly and its MENA partners in democratic reform.

40. The concept – developed with Vahit Erdem, the outgoing Chairman of the Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group – would be to meet with the Assembly's MENA partners and identify the areas where cooperation in democratic reform would be useful and welcome. To facilitate that, the Assembly could call upon its extensive experience to explain security sector reform, how it can be implemented, and what the Assembly can contribute. The meeting could therefore also involve non-MENA partners from Eastern Europe – who could share their experience of post-Soviet democratic transition, and representatives from other bodies with expertise in other aspects of democratic reform who are also looking to work with MENA parliaments.

41. This meeting would draw on the spirit of and experience from the Rose-Roth Seminars which the Assembly held in the early 1990s, and which aimed to engage the new political forces in Central and Eastern Europe in dialogue and determine ways in which the Assembly could assist in the process of democratic transition. In effect, the proposed meeting would thus combine a Mediterranean and Middle East Special Seminar and a Rose-Roth Seminar, and would feature as such on the Assembly's Calendar of Activities. The most obvious location for such a seminar would be a member country in the Mediterranean area. The International Secretariat is following up on informal discussions which have taken place, and – naturally – would welcome offers to host future seminars.

42. A final observation should be made on the issue of democratic assistance to countries of the MENA region. The Assembly has declared its willingness – indeed its eagerness – to cooperate with parliaments in the MENA region as they develop their programmes of democratic reform. It remains difficult to predict precisely where and when the opportunities for such cooperation will arise. The proposed Rose-Roth/GSM seminar would provide a good opportunity for a first round of discussions with representatives of the MENA region about their needs and prospects for assistance. However, it is worth recalling that the Assembly has a number of existing tools at its disposal which it could draw on quickly should the opportunity arise. Training programmes, for instance, are a flexible "tool" and can be put together quickly. Specific

² Depending upon circumstances, there are sometimes two visits and one seminar.

programmes could be organised in Brussels for parliamentarians from the region or parliamentary staff. The New Parliamentarians Programme, a three-day training programme on NATO held in Brussels and open to parliamentarians from member and non-member delegations of the Assembly who are either newly elected or new to defence issues, would also provide another opportunity to bring new parliamentarians from the region together with colleagues from NATO member countries to learn about defence and security sector reform and mechanisms for democratic control of the armed forces.

43. In any event, the Standing Committee meeting in late March 2012 will provide an opportunity to re-examine developments in the MENA region and make any appropriate adjustments to the Assembly's plans for engagement and cooperation in democratic reform.

B. NATO OPERATIONS

44. Needless to say, Afghanistan will continue to feature prominently on the Assembly's agenda according to current proposals. Two Committees intend to consider reports on Afghanistan, one looking at regional security, and the other looking at the future of the international military presence in Afghanistan. Efforts will also be made to conduct two fact-finding visits. As usual, these would be organised with the support of ISAF and would involve small delegations of about 8 members.

45. Coverage of NATO's involvement in Afghanistan will also feature within a wide range of other Assembly activities, including Sub-Committee visits, Committee speakers, and the Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum.

46. The same applies to other NATO operations such as KFOR and Active Endeavour, but *Ocean Shield* - countering piracy off the Horn of Africa - will receive particular attention in the form of a DSC report on piracy and a DSCTC activity, as agreed by the Standing Committee in the Azores.

C. POST LISBON ADAPTATION

47. At last November's Lisbon Summit, NATO's Heads of State and Government adopted a wide-ranging package of measures, including a new Strategic Concept. The process of implementing those measures is continuing and preparations are being made for another NATO Summit from 20-21 May 2012 in Chicago. The Assembly continues to monitor the "Lisbon package" in a variety of ways, including through an information document which is circulated to all Committees. During 2012, the DSC will consider a report on post-Lisbon adaptation, taking into account the lessons from *Unified Protector*, NATO's operation to protect civilians, and enforce an arms embargo and no-fly-zone on Libya. A DSC Sub-Committee will visit France as the Sub-Committee continues its programme of gathering national perspectives on Alliance adaptation. The STC is considering a report either on cyber security or the increasing use of drones in operations and the future of military technology.

48. The joint Committee meetings in February³ would also be a natural venue for considering Lisbon implementation, including headquarters and command structure reform, new approaches to capability development etc.

³ A proposal for the format of the joint Committee meetings in Brussels in February appears later in this report

49. Another proposed report - on Transatlantic security and challenges to Alliance cohesion to be considered by the PC - is also relevant to the same priority heading, although is equally relevant to the impact of the ongoing financial and economic crisis.

D. PARTNERSHIPS, REGIONAL SECURITY ISSUES, GENDER ETC

50. Many proposed reports and activities could easily be presented as addressing the theme of partnerships. Equally, several relate to various aspects of regional security identified as Assembly priorities: the South Caucasus, the High North, and the Balkans. The only apparent gap is explicit coverage of Georgia. Efforts should therefore be made to ensure that Georgia features appropriately in the Assembly's work in 2012. This might be achieved in part of the proposed Rose-Roth seminar in Azerbaijan, or perhaps by presentations in a Committee or even a plenary sitting, or by a Bureau visit. In the absence of any proposals emerging during the Co-ordination Meeting, this matter could be taken up by the Assembly's Bureau and the Standing Committee.

51. Another matter which must continue to feature in the Assembly's work is the consideration of security and gender. While this matter implicitly pervades all aspects of security - gender issues in the armed forces, gender issues and the victims of conflict, the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution etc - there is a general sentiment within the Standing Committee that it should feature explicitly in the Assembly's work. In 2011, for instance, the Bucharest Plenary Sitting will feature a panel on gender questions. In Bucharest, the CDS Committee will review implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in NATO member countries. Gender issues will also feature prominently on the agenda of the Rose-Roth Seminar transition in Afghanistan (including through a presentation by the female governor of an Afghan province).

52. None of the Committees currently plans a report with gender as a central theme, and it might be too early to ask the Committees to specify how else they might address this topic. However, if no specific proposal emerges from the Bucharest session, this should be raised during the next Standing Committee meeting - late March 2012 - to ensure that appropriate coverage is provided using Assembly "tools" such as Committee speakers, plenary speakers, seminar sessions etc.

E. THE PATTERN OF ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES PROPOSED FOR 2012

53. In both 2009 and 2010, the Assembly organized 47 activities. Although many, but not all, members of the Standing Committee agreed that this level of activity was difficult to sustain, there are obvious practical difficulties in reducing that number. The difficulty lies in the fact that the total is made up of many small programmes. For instance, each of the eight Sub-Committees can hold two meetings each year. A reduction of just one Sub-Committee meeting would therefore be a 50 per cent cut in a Sub-Committee's programme.

54. The only practical approach was therefore to increase the number of joint meetings. Several of these usually feature on the Assembly's Calendar of Activities as a natural consequence of two bodies addressing a subject in a complementary manner, and the Standing Committee encouraged the Assembly's various bodies and programmes to incorporate more joint activities in their schedules for 2011. This was a major factor in reducing the number of activities from 47 in 2010 down to an expected 39 in 2011.⁴ As noted earlier, one consequence of this has been fewer clashes in the Calendar, and fewer occasions where activities have come close to cancellation through poor participation.

⁴ Another factor was that no exceptional activities have taken place such as election monitoring.

55. Plans for 2012 include slightly fewer joint meetings than 2011, but still more than in earlier years. All five Committees and the GSM will conduct at least one joint activity, and – as noted earlier – it is proposed that there should be a joint Rose-Roth and GSM seminar. Thus, it is likely that about 40 activities would take place in 2012, assuming that the pattern of special visits to Afghanistan, Presidential visits, and parliamentary training activities is similar to previous years.

56. In terms of locations for the Committee-related activities and seminar-style events, nineteen would take place in NATO member nations; six in other Euro-Atlantic countries, three in the MENA region, and two activities are proposed in less familiar locations.

57. Regarding the proposals for activities in non-NATO Euro-Atlantic countries, it should be mentioned that one of these visits would take place in Russia. This would be the first Committee-related activity there since 2006⁵.

58. With respect to activities proposed in “less familiar” locations, the PCNP proposes to visit Pakistan, a location it last visited in 2007. Again, the focus of the visit would be regional security, a subject of clear and direct relevance to NATO’s operations in Afghanistan. This visit would evidently be subject to advice on the security situation. The second proposed activity in this category would be a DSCTR visit to military facilities in Djibouti; the headquarters of the United States 5th Fleet (in Bahrain); and the joint US-UK military facility in Diego Garcia (British Indian Ocean Territory). The DSCTC Chairman will elaborate on the rationale and logistics for such a visit during the Co-ordination Meeting on Friday 7 October at the Bucharest Session.

F. SESSIONS AND THE 2012 FEBRUARY MEETINGS

59. Mention must be made of the three largest events in the Assembly’s Calendar of Activities; Sessions and the joint Committee meetings in Brussels each February.

60. Sessions in 2011 are the first to have taken place in a shorter format following Standing Committee decisions intended to reduce the burden on session hosts and take account of concerns about the ongoing financial and economic crisis.

61. Planning for future sessions is taking place on the basis of the new, shorter format and it seems that spring sessions can be adapted to such a format relatively easily. Matters are more complex for annual sessions where the Committee meetings are longer, texts are amended and voted upon, and elections take place. Compromises and choices about the timing of various meetings must be made. It would be useful to look at these in more detail during the Standing Committee meeting in early 2012.

62. Regarding the February meetings, the Secretary General was asked to make a proposal for the format of the meetings in 2012 following the experience in 2011 which departed from the traditional arrangement.

63. On that basis, the Secretary General proposes essentially to return to the format of earlier years but to hold all meetings – with the exception of the meeting with the North Atlantic Council – at *The Hotel* (formerly the Hilton Brussels).

64. On Sunday and Monday morning, the programme would, as usual, include meetings with senior NATO officials. Efforts would also be made to secure a presentation from a SHAPE official.⁶

⁵ A Rose-Roth Seminar took place in Sochi in 2006. A Presidential visit to Moscow was to have taken place in 2008 but this was cancelled as a result of the conflict between Russia and Georgia. As noted earlier, a Bureau visit to Moscow is scheduled for November 2011.

65. On the Monday afternoon when the Standing Committee meets the North Atlantic Council, a programme would take place for all other members at The Hotel. Proposals for topics to be addressed in this part of the programme are welcome. One possibility would be to focus on cyber-security with presentations from NATO's Computer Incident Response Capability and private sector representatives perhaps.

66. On the Tuesday morning when the Committees used to meet at the European Commission, meetings would again take place at The Hotel, although the focus would still be on issues of central interest to the Economics and Security Committee.

67. Again, the Standing Committee meeting in March 2012 will provide an opportunity to review these arrangements and decide whether to make further changes in the structure of the joint Committee meetings in Brussels.

IV. DECISIONS AND GUIDANCE

68. As noted in the introduction to this document, the Bucharest Session is being held earlier than most annual sessions (early October as opposed to mid November). This means that plans for the forthcoming year must be laid down somewhat further in advance and with less time for preparatory discussions with prospective hosts for activities. Hence, many projected meetings are still listed with no clear indication of their possible dates.

69. Furthermore, in considering the overall package of proposals for 2012 and the understandable emphasis on the MENA region, it should be borne in mind that certain locations remain volatile and there should be the flexibility to adapt to evolving assessments of the most appropriate aspects and areas for Assembly engagement.

70. Regarding proposed activities in the MENA region, the Standing Committee should consider one specific case. As noted earlier, the PCNP is considering activities in either Qatar or Bahrain (both on the basis of long-standing invitations.) The Standing Committee's guidance is sought.

71. The Standing Committee should also consider extending the arrangement which has been in place to ensure cohesion in the MENA-related visits of GSM and PCNP. Under this arrangement, GSM officers have been invited to MENA related visits of the PCNP, and vice-versa if relevant to the Political Committee's agenda. For the time-being, it might be worth expanding this arrangement to enable the officers of the GSM to participate in any Committee-related visits to the MENA region.

72. In terms of report subjects, as noted earlier, four proposed reports will deal with developments in the MENA region. The approach does seem to be complementary but the Standing Committee should satisfy itself that this coverage is appropriate and not to the detriment of other priorities which may in turn deserve greater emphasis.

73. Another specific point requiring Standing Committee approval is the proposal to hold a special seminar which would focus on the prospects for cooperation on democratic reform in the MENA region and which would therefore bring together elements of GSM and Rose-Roth seminars.

⁶ This would allow members to hear the perspective from NATO's military headquarters, and would be instead of the delegation travelling to SHAPE Headquarters in Mons, as has happened on occasion in previous years.

74. The Standing Committee normally gives explicit consideration to proposals for activities outside the normal pattern because although such activities can be extraordinarily useful and interesting, they can also have significant implications for budgets, members' time commitments, and possible public perceptions.

75. For 2012, attention should be drawn to two proposals. One is the PCNP's proposal to visit Pakistan, and the other is the DSCTC's proposal to visit military facilities in Djibouti, Bahrain, and Diego Garcia.

76. Finally, the Standing Committee's approval is sought for the proposed format of the joint Committee meetings to be held in February 2012 in Brussels.

77. The Standing Committee should also decide whether the proposed activities and reports adequately reflect key priorities. It should amend proposals for activities and report subjects before approving the final "package" of proposals. As mentioned, the proposals outlined in this document would maintain the level of activity established on 2011.

78. Inevitably, proposals for the forthcoming calendar year must be somewhat more tentative than normal due to the early session date. It will therefore be necessary to review plans particularly carefully at the first Standing Committee of 2012 when there will still be time to make substantial "course corrections" in the light of developments in the international arena.

79. The early spring Standing Committee in Slovenia will also provide an opportunity for a first assessment of the new session format implemented at the Spring Session in Varna and the Annual Session in Bucharest. At the meeting in Slovenia, the Standing Committee should also assess the new arrangement for the participation of the Russian delegation in Committee and Sub-Committee activities, as agreed in the Azores in April 2011.

APPENDIX – THE FRAMEWORK FOR ASSEMBLY ACTIVITIES

Sessions and Standing Committee	
Spring and Annual Sessions, and one Standing Committee meeting ⁷	
Committee activities	
Committee on the Civil Dimension Of Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Each Sub-Committee meets twice• the DSC meets in the United States• the DSC, ESC, and PC meet in February in Brussels followed by the ESC meeting at the OECD in Paris• the CDS and STC usually each hold a meeting. <p>=21 meetings⁸</p>
Sub-Committee on Democratic Governance	
Defence and Security Committee	
Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Defence and Security Co-operation	
Sub-Committee on Future Security and Defence Capabilities	
Economics and Security Committee	
Sub-Committee on East-West Economic Co-operation and Convergence	
Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Economic Relations	
Political Committee	
Sub-Committee on NATO Partnerships	
Sub-Committee on Transatlantic Relations	
Science and Technology Committee	
Sub-Committee on Energy and Environmental Security	
Other Assembly bodies	
Mediterranean and Middle East Special Group (GSM)	One visit and two seminars
NATO-Russia Parliamentary Committee (NRPC)	Two meetings (at each session)
Ukraine-NATO Interparliamentary Council (UNIC)	Two meetings (Brussels and Ukraine)
NATO-Georgia Interparliamentary Council (NGIC)	Meets during other activities
Presidential activities (visits, NATO summit etc)	Up to four
Other Assembly meetings	
Rose-Roth Seminars or other seminar-style meetings	Three per year
Parliamentary Transatlantic Forum	One per year
Special visits to Afghanistan	Up to two per year
New Parliamentarians Programme	One per year
Parliamentary Training Programmes	Three to four per year
Further possibilities include	
NATO and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council activities	
European Parliament hearings on European Security and Defence Policy	
Participation in sessions of other interparliamentary organizations	

⁷ The Standing Committee also meets the Permanent Representatives to the North Atlantic Council during the joint Committee meetings which take place each February in Brussels.

⁸ Counting the February meetings in Brussels and the ESC meeting in Paris as two separate meetings