

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT



BUREAU

MINUTES

of the meeting of

12-12-2011

Louise Weiss Building - Room R 1.1

Strasbourg

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MINUTES

of the meeting of Monday, 12 December 2011
from 18:30 to 20:30 hrs

Louise Weiss Building – Room R 1.1

Strasbourg

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BUREAU

MINUTES

of the meeting of Monday, 12 December 2011

Brussels

Mr Jerzy BUZEK, President of the European Parliament, opened the meeting at 18h35 hours.

Present

Mr Jerzy BUZEK, President**

Vice-Presidents

Ms KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU

Ms PODIMATA**

Mr MARTÍNEZ

Mr VIDAL-QUADRAS**

Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT**

Mr ROUČEK**

Ms DURANT**

Ms ANGELILLI

Ms WALLIS

Mr TÓKÉS**

Mr McMILLAN-SCOTT

Mr WIELAND**

Mr CHICHESTER

Excused

Mr PITTELLA

Quaestors

Ms GERINGER DE OEDENBERG

Mr HIGGINS

Ms LULLING*

Mr MAŠTÁLKA**

Mr NEWTON DUNN*

Excused

Also Present

Mr WELLE, Secretary-General**

Invited the meeting

** present for Items 8 and 9 *in camera*

* present for Item 8 *in camera*

Mr LAMBRINIDIS, Former Foreign Affairs of Greece and Former Vice-President of the European Parliament

List of officials present at the meeting:

Private Office of the President

Mr TEASDALE
Ms WORUM**
Mr HUBER
Mr FISCHER
Mr ALPERMANN
Mr STUTZMANN
Ms VLASE

Private Office of the Secretary-General

Mr DREXLER*
Mr MANGOLD**
Ms LUEDDECKE
Mr SCHEIBA
Ms BLAU
Ms KERGLONOU
Ms FREDSGAARD

Secretariat

DG Presidency (PRES)	Ms RATTI**/ Mr O'BEARA/ Mr CAROZZA/Mr THOMANN/ Mr HEYMANS
DG Internal Policies (IPOL)	Mr RIBERA d'ALCALA/ Mr REY
DG External Policies (EXPO)	Mr AGUIRIANO/ Mr PENALVER GARCIA
DG Information (COMM)	Ms LAHOUSSE/ Mr DUCH-GUILLOT/ Mr WARASIN/ Ms VAN DEN BROEKE
DG Personnel (PERS)	Mr QUITIN**
DG Infrastructure and Logistics (INLO)	Mr STRATIGAKIS*/ Mr GAVRIL*/ Mr PESESSE*
DG Translation (TRAD)	Ms PITT
DG Interpretation and Conferences (INTE)	Ms COSMIDOU
DG Finance (FINS)	Mr VANHAEREN*/ Mr GUILLEN ZANON
DG Innovation, Technical Support (ITEC)	Mr VILELLA
Legal Service	Mr PENNERA**, Jurisconsult/ Mr PASSOS/ Mr PETTERSHEIM*
Conference of President's Secretariat	Mr HILLER

** Present for Items 8 and 9 *in camera*

* Present for Item 8 *in camera*

Relations with the secretariats of the political groups Mr WINKLER

Political group secretariats

Mr RIPOLL	(EPP)
Ms PEARSON	(S&D)
Mr BOUTER	(ALDE)
Mr PRUMMEL	(Greens/EFA)
Mr WOODARD	(ECR)
Mr RAECK	(GUE/NGL)
Ms LAIKAUF	(EFD)
Mr SERVELLON	(Non-attached Members)

Vice-Presidents' and Quaestors' assistants

Mr MARTINELLI	Mr PITTELLA's assistant
Ms TRAKADAS	Ms KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU's assistant
Ms ASTERIADI	Ms PODIMATA's assistant
Mr GUERRA REINA	Mr MARTÍNEZ's assistant
Ms CABANELAS ALVAREZ	Mr VIDAL-QUADRAS's assistant
Mr SCHWARZ	Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT's assistant
Ms ZANELLA	Mr ROUCEK's assistant
Mr VALETTE	Ms DURANT's assistant
Mr LOMBARDO	Ms ANGELILLI's assistant
Ms THIEL	Ms WALLIS's assistant
Mr SZILAGYI	Mr TÓKÉS's assistant
Ms BIESEMANS	Mr McMILLAN-SCOTT's assistant
Mr BECKER	Mr WIELAND's assistant
Ms ZIELINSKA	Ms GERINGER de OEDENBERG's assistant
Ms KEARNEY	Mr HIGGINS's assistant
Mr ROMANOVSKIS	Ms LULLING's assistant
Ms ŘEHOŘOVÁ	Mr MAŠTÁLKA's assistant
Ms KONTÁR	Mr NEWTON DUNN's assistant

Ms LINNUS**, Mr TZIORKAS, Mr TOPPING, Mr CALINOGLOU and Mr WILKINSON acted as secretary to the meeting.

** Present for Items 8 and 9 *in camera*

1. Adoption of draft agenda

The Bureau

- noted the draft agenda (PE 476.781/BUR) and adopted it as shown in these minutes.

2. Approval of Minutes of meeting of 30 November 2011

The Bureau

- noted and approved the minutes of the meeting of 30 November 2011 in Brussels (PE 476.709/BUR).

3. Statements by the President

3.1 Secretariat to the Parliamentary Assembly for a Union of the Mediterranean

The Bureau,

- heard the President thank Mr PITELLA and Ms DURANT, Vice-Presidents, for the negotiation and successful conclusion of a draft agreement between the European Parliament and the Belgian authorities concerning the setting-up of a Secretariat for the Parliamentary Assembly for a Union of the Mediterranean and inform that once the legal and legal-linguistic verification was completed the agreement would be signed in an official ceremony.

A. DECISIONS/EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

4. Creation of a Directorate for Democracy Support - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau,

- took note of a note from the Secretary-General on the creation of a Directorate for Democracy Support, dated 7 December 2011 (PE 476.821/BUR);
- heard the President introduce the matter and recall the European Parliament's existing efforts to support democracy around the world;
- heard the Secretary-General:
 - outline his proposal to increase European Parliament's impact in this area, in particular because of new political developments in Northern Africa and the Middle East, by bringing the various support instruments in different parts of the administration together in one Directorate that would be responsible for:
 - the monitoring and continued follow-up of parliamentary elections;
 - the promotion of parliamentary democracy, including new forms of e-democracy, legislative cooperation and building up / managing of programmes such as Euromedscola;
 - managing all administrative activities in connection with the Sakharov Network and related events;
 - providing support to the Parliaments in the Western Balkans.
 - underline that the changes would be budgetary-neutral and would not involve the creation of any new posts;
 - mention that a new Supervisory Board would be created at a later date;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU, Mr McMILLAN-SCOTT, Mr ROUČEK, Ms ROTH-

BEHRENDT and Ms DURANT, Vice-Presidents, during which support for the proposal was widely expressed;

- heard Mr McMILLAN-SCOTT, Vice-President, request that the staffing of the new Directorate be dealt with separately;
- heard Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT, Vice-President, propose that a number of the Units in the new Directorate should be given broader responsibilities and consequently renamed;
- noted the view of the Secretary-General that a more general title could be envisaged for the Unit dealing with the Sakharov Network and Human Rights related events and that staffing matters would be dealt with at a later date according to the usual procedures;
- approved unanimously the establishment of a Directorate for Democracy Support in the DG for External Policies in a budget neutral manner through redeployment;
- invited the Secretary-General to implement this decision and make a proposal for the structure of a Supervisory Board to the Bureau with a view to a decision on the nominal composition by the Conference of Presidents.

5. Resource-efficient Full Multilingualism - Interpretation - Note from the Secretary- General

The Bureau,

- took note of a note from the Secretary-General, dated 7 December 2011 (PE 476.822/BUR);
- heard the Secretary-General highlight the proposals aimed at implementing the Bureau decision of 26 September to reduce the overall amount of the 2012 Draft Estimates of the European Parliament, which would lead to 30% less expenditure on freelance interpreters and overall savings of €10.000.000 per year for interpretation services;
- heard the Secretary-General indicate that:
 - the proposed measures formalise commitments already made;
 - the measures to be introduced would include:
 - more stringent application of the duration of meetings in the evening;
 - spreading Committee meetings more evenly over the week;
 - matching real interpretation demand to the available resources;
 - providing interpretation for new accession countries by EP staff interpreters only;
- heard Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ, Vice-President responsible for multilingualism, express the view that the proposals rationalised the interpretation service, and that the decision to spread committee meetings more evenly over the week were to be applied in the same manner to all committees;
- held an exchange of views on the matter, with the participation of Ms KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU, Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT and Mr WIELAND, Vice-Presidents and Mr NEWTON DUNN, Ms LULLING and Mr HIGGINS, Quaestors, pointing out in particular:

- the need to achieve an even spread of meetings;
- ways of matching the provision of interpretation services with real need;
- noted the Secretary-General's commitment that the measures would be applied fairly to all committees, and thereby underlining that political support was of prime importance for the proper implementation;
- endorsed the statement by Mr MARTÍNEZ MARTÍNEZ, Vice-President, that the European Parliament interpretation service was a model for the rest of the world;
- approved unanimously the proposed implementation plan;
- requested the Secretary-General to implement the measures as of the beginning of the second half of the mandate.

6. Implementation of the Code of Conduct for Members of the EP- Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau,

- took note of a note from the Secretary-General, dated 6 December 2011 (PE 476.817/BUR and annexes);
- heard the President welcome to the meeting Mr LAMBRINIDIS, former Vice-President, who had been invited to attend the debate on the Code of Conduct of Members of the European Parliament in his capacity as former Vice-Chair of the relevant Working Group;
- heard the President introduce the item and note that
 - the new Code of Conduct for Members of the EP with respect to financial interests and conflicts of interest had been adopted on 1 December by the Plenary with an overwhelming majority of 619 votes in favour, 2 against and 6 abstentions (report CASINI);
 - the Code would enter into force on 1 January 2012, and that therefore, the necessary implementing measures should be decided by the Bureau as soon as possible, particularly as regards the new form for the financial declaration and transparency safeguards for paid travels organised by third parties;
 - considering that the Advisory Committee, to be composed of five Members from amongst the bureaux and coordinators of the Legal Affairs Committee and the Constitutional Affairs Committee, with the task to provide guidance and advice on the interpretation and implementation of the Code, could not be constituted before the end of January 2012 due to the mid-term elections of Parliament's bodies, the Plenary agreed to a transitional period of 90 days, i.e. until 30 March 2011 the latest, for the completion of the new financial declaration;
- heard Mr ROUCEK, Vice-President, who replaced Mr LAMBRINIDIS, former Vice-President, as Vice-Chair of the Working Group on Codes of Conduct, welcome the

new Code of Conduct for Members of the EP and note that it was the first time that Parliament disposed of such a detailed declaration of financial interests;

- heard Mr LAMBRINIDIS, former Vice-President, stress the importance of the Code of Conduct with a view to enhancing transparency and Parliament's image among the citizens and underline that this code will be an important legacy of the President and this Bureau to the European Parliament;
- held a wide ranging exchange of views with the participation of the President, Mr CHICHESTER, Mr WIELAND, Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT, Mr VIDAL QUADRAS, Mr MARTINEZ, Ms PODIMATA, Ms DURANT, Vice-Presidents, Ms LULLING, Ms GERINGER DE OEDENBERG, Mr HIGGINS, Quaestors, who expressed broad support for the Code of Conduct and the Implementing Measures, while at the same time noting the need for:
 - guidance to the Members concerning the completion of the new financial declaration, which changed considerably compared with the form Members were used to fill in to date;
 - appropriate administrative structures to support the Advisory Committee in its difficult task;
 - a well structured communication campaign to explain to the media and the citizens the important changes introduced with the Code of Conduct;
 - clarifications concerning, in particular, the requirement for Members to declare their occupation(s) and membership(s) of any bodies established in law during a three year period before they took up office with the Parliament;
- approved the proposed Implementing Measures as laid down in the note from the Secretary General, particularly as regards the alignment of the current financial declaration to the provisions of the new Code of Conduct;
- invited the Secretary General to take the necessary administrative implementing measures;

- invited the Quaestors to consider, in due course, the issue of the transparency on paid travel to events organised by third parties (Article 5(3) of the Code of Conduct) and submit concrete proposals to the Bureau.

7. Global Security concept for the European Parliament: State of play on implementation - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau,

- noted the following document:
 - a note from the Secretary-General, dated 7 December 2011, (PE 476.803/BUR and annex);
- heard the President recall the previous discussions on this matter, and in particular, the unanimous endorsement by the Bureau of a new Global Security Concept (GSC) at its meeting of 6 July 2011, as well as its instruction to the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General to carry out its implementation and to report back to the Bureau on the state of play before the end of 2012;
- heard the Deputy Secretary-General outline the progress made on the implementation of the Global Security Concept and highlight:
 - the difficulties in finding suitably qualified staff in order to implement the GSC, given the highly specialised nature of the tasks involved and the non-availability of the necessary skill-set amongst the existing personnel of the Parliament or other EU institutions;
 - the need for flexible management based on a risk-based security approach;
 - the need for crisis planning and "zoning";
 - the value of testing procedures through exercises;
 - a proposal to establish a working group with the Parliament's Directorates-General in order to improve security consciousness throughout the administration;
- heard Mr NEWTON DUNN, Quaestor responsible, welcome the progress achieved;
- heard Mr WIELAND, Vice-President, express his concern regarding a number of missing elements in the GSP;
- held a wide-ranging exchange of views with the participation of, Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT, Ms DURANT, Mr CHICHESTER and Ms PODIMATA, Vice-Presidents and Ms LULLING and Mr HIGGINS, Quaestors, and Ms RATTI, Deputy

Secretary-General, and the President, noting in particular:

- the general satisfaction with and support of the new Global Security Concept;
 - the need to involve political groups as "players" in the implementation of the GSC;
 - the importance of avoiding long queues at the entrances to Parliament's buildings, while maintaining a sensible balance between security needs and accessibility of EP premises to lobbyists and other external visitors;
 - the general support for the internalisation of key security functions;
 - the timetable for the establishment of security zones with different levels of security on Parliament's premises;
 - the possibility of a contribution from DG ITEC to the process, in particular concerning cyber-security;
 - progress towards the putting in place of emergency tannoy and electronic alert systems throughout Parliament's buildings;
 - the success of the recent test evacuation of the Paul-Henri Spaak building in Brussels;
- heard Mrs ROTH-BEHRENDT, Vice-President, state her disagreement with and request for a reversal of the earlier Bureau decision to reserve the PHS entrance for protocol use and to close it to Members of the EP;
- heard the President thank the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General and Parliament's services for their hard work on this matter and express his full support for the measures taken and the proposals;
- invited the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General to present the Bureau with a further update of the implementation of the Global Security Concept by mid 2012.

From 21.30 hours, *in camera*

8. KAD building in Luxembourg - Progress report on the project - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, meeting *in camera*

- took note of a note from the Secretary-General, distributed to the Members of the Bureau under separate and confidential cover;
- heard the Secretary-General introduce the matter relating to the state of play of the Konrad Adenauer building project (KAD) in Luxembourg and state that:
 - the KAD project was one of the biggest building projects of the European Parliament and that -for the first time - Parliament was acting as a developer, which involves several risks relation for instance to the price, date of delivery, legal actions and construction mistakes;
 - the financing structure had been established after initial problems;
 - the outcome of the calls-to-tender for six work lots for the KAD building project had been much higher than the initial assessment and that they had subsequently been refused;
 - it would be almost impossible to realise this project without active support from the Luxembourg authorities - similar to the support provided for building projects of the Commission and the Court of Justice;
 - decisions would need to be taken to reduce any potential risks;
 - Parliament has already invested roughly 10% of the planned budget in the project;
 - the political and economic context has considerably changed since the original decision launching this building project;
- heard Mr VIDAL-QUADRAS, Vice-President with primary responsibility for buildings policy, remind the Bureau that the original decision to extend the KAD

building had been taken on 12 June 2006 by approving an agreement between the Luxembourg Government, the *Fonds d'Urbanisation et d'Aménagement du Plateau Kirschberg* and the European Parliament, and recall that the Bureau had, by its decision of 2 February 2009, wanted to opt for savings in the building project by acting itself as a developer;

- noted a certain lack of commitment on the part of the Luxembourg Government to honour its undertaking to set up enhanced partnership arrangements with Parliament for the building project;
- heard Ms LULLING, Quaestor, indicate that following her recent contacts with the Luxembourg Government, there was readiness to examine the matter rapidly so as to lend any necessary support to the project;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of the President, Mr VIDAL-QUADRAS, Ms DURANT, Mr WIELAND and Mr ROUČEK, Vice-Presidents, and Ms LULLING and Mr MAŠTÁLKA, Quaestors;
- heard the Secretary-General inform that the offer of the banks for the financing would expire on 18 January 2012 and that the Bureau should return to this matter at its meeting on 10 January 2012;
- invited the Secretary-General to meet with the Luxembourg authorities and to present them the Parliament's requirements in order to protect its financial interests, as well as to explore different options for the future conduct of this project and to submit his conclusions to the Bureau based on this exchange of views;
- noted that the President would be able to meet with the Luxembourg Government in early 2012, should it be necessary.

9. Staff matters

The Bureau, meeting *in camera*

- took note of two notes from the Secretary-General, distributed to the Members of the Bureau under separate and confidential cover;
- heard the Secretary-General introduce the matter relating to the appointment of two Directors in Parliament, in accordance with the Bureau decision of 20 February 2008 laying down the stages in the procedure for the appointment of senior officials;
- considered two reports from the Advisory Committees set up in accordance with the above rules;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT, Vice-President responsible for staff policy, and Mr VIDAL-QUADRAS, Vice-President;
- approved, unanimously, the appointment of Mr Freddy DREXLER as Director of Legal Affairs in the Legal Service;
- approved, unanimously, the appointment of Mr Didier PETERSHEIM as Director of Administrative and Financial Affairs in the Legal Service.

B. DECISIONS WITHOUT DEBATE

10. Adjustment of Members' General Expenditure allowances and certain parameters of Members' Travel and Subsistence - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, without debate,

- noted the following document:
 - a note from the Secretary-General, dated 7 December 2011 (PE 476.827/PE)
- decided in the light of the Plenary decision of 26 October 2011, that the allowances of Members for travel and subsistence expenditure would exceptionally not be increased for the year 2012;
- confirmed its decision of 26 September 2011 of not indexing the Members' allowance for general expenditure for the year 2012.

11. Adjustment of Members' Parliamentary Assistance allowances - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, without debate,

- noted the following document:
 - a note from the Secretary-General, dated 7 December 2011 (PE 476.801/BUR)
- approved the increase of the monthly maximum amount for parliamentary assistance expenditure with a percentage equal to the percentage to be decided by the Council for the remuneration of EU officials on the basis of the proposal of the Commission (1.7%), the increase being applicable as from the same dates as the adjustments of the remunerations of the accredited assistants;
- amended accordingly article 33 (4) of the Implementing Measures for the Statute of Members and mandated the Secretary-General to proceed with the necessary publication in the Official Journal.

12. Revision of Annex II of the Rules governing the use of Parliament's premises by outside bodies - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, without debate,

- noted the following document:
 - a note from the Secretary-General, dated 6 December 2011 (PE 476.756/BUR)
- endorsed the revision and the updating of Annex II of the Rules governing the Use of Parliament's Premises by Outside Bodies as set out in the note from the Secretary General;
- endorsed the proposal to revise the fixed charges in Annex II annually in accordance with the modalities set out in the note from the Secretary General.

13. Setting up of a Supervisory Board for Impact Assessment - Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, with debate,

- took note of a note from the Secretary-General, dated 7 December 2011, on the above mentioned matter (PE 476.823/BUR);
- held an exchange of views on the subject matter with the participation of the President, Ms DURANT, Ms PODIMATA, Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT, Mr WIELAND, Vice-Presidents, Ms LULLING, Quaestor, who welcomed the proposals from the Secretary-General concerning the structure of the Supervisory Board for the Directorate for Impact Assessment and noted *inter alia* that:
 - the impact assessments carried out by the Directorate should constitute an opinion, and not have a decisive or compelling character; the final decision should always be a political one to be taken by the Members in the committee responsible;
 - impact assessments should not look only at the budgetary impact, but also take environmental and social aspects into account;
 - the new Directorate should not create any further bureaucracy; thus. the results of the impact assessments should be delivered in a reasonable time, in order not to impede the legislative process and allow Parliament to adopt its position in line with the deadlines laid down in the various legislative procedures;
 - as concerns the Supervisory Board, its Members should represent the Committees with the most legislative workload; therefore the services should carry out an analysis of the last 2,5 years to establish the seven most active Committees in terms of legislative workload;
 - the Members should then be appointed by the Conference of Presidents, on a proposal from the political groups, in line with the numerical distribution of posts included in the note from the Secretary General;
- heard the Secretary General note that:

- the main concept and tasks of the Directorate for Impact Assessments had been elaborated in his principal note, which had been approved by the Bureau at its meeting of 4 July 2011;
 - the Bureau was invited to approve the proposal for the structure of the Supervisory Board for the Directorate for Impact Assessment, which should respect a political balance, in line with the respective power of the political groups; the Conference of Presidents should then proceed with the nomination of the Members of the Supervisory Board on a proposal from the political groups;
 - the representation of Committees on the Supervisory Board should take account of the actual legislative workload of the various Committees based on an analysis to be carried out by the relevant services;
- approved the structure of the Supervisory Board for the Directorate for Impact Assessment in line with the proposal included in the note from the Secretary General;
 - invited the Conference of Presidents to proceed with the nomination of the Members of the Supervisory Board.

14. Multilingualism - proposal to extend the derogations from Rule 146 on the use of languages -
Note from the Secretary-General

The Bureau, without debate,

- noted the following document:
 - a letter from, the Secretary-General, dated 6 December 2011 (PE 476.757/BUR);
- took note that, as of 1 January 2012, despite sustained inter-institutional efforts
 - there will still not be sufficient qualified interpreters available for Maltese;
 - there will still not be sufficient qualified interpreters, translators or lawyer-linguists available for Irish;
- decided, bearing in mind that the shortage of qualified linguistic staff persisted despite adequate precautions having been taken, to:
 - extend the derogations under Rule 147 with respect to Maltese interpretation until 30 June 2012;
 - extend the derogation under Rule 147 with respect to Irish until 30 June 2012.

15. Draft programme for travel by parliamentary committee delegations outside the three places of work during 2012 - Letter from Mr LEHNE, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs

The Bureau, without debate

- noted the following documents:
 - a letter from Mr LEHNE, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, transmitting the draft programme for travel by parliamentary committees outside the three places of work for 2012, dated 26 October 2011 (PE 473.250/CPG, annexes and financial statement);
 - a letter from Mr MULDER, Chair of the Committee on Budgetary Control, outlining supplementary information concerning that committee's 2012 travel programme, dated 15 November 2011 (PE 473/CPG/Ann);
 - a letter from Ms JOLY, Chair of the Committee on Development, outlining supplementary information concerning that committee's 2012 travel programme (PE 473.250/CPG/Ann/CPG), dated 6 December 2011;
 - updated Rules: Bureau decision on travel by Committee Delegations outside the three places of work of the EP (PE 422.576/CPG), dated 14 November 2011;
- recalled the rules in force governing travel by delegations from the parliamentary committees outside the three places of work;
- noted the opinion given by the Conference of Presidents at its meeting of 8 December 2011 on the draft programme;

Calendar of committee travel in 2012

- welcomed the fact that the parliamentary committees have scheduled their delegations, as far as possible, in accordance with the 2012 calendar of parliamentary activities; noted, nonetheless, that a certain number of committee delegation visits were planned at periods which included days without parliamentary activities (Fridays), weekends and public holidays; approved those requests; recalled that any other derogation from the rules on travel periods or quotas needed to be subject to individual authorisation;

- regretted the lack of precision in the programmes submitted by a number of Committees, as regards the number of participating Members and/or the foreseen dates of travel for the proposed visits; the latter concerned, in particular, the SEDE and DROI Subcommittees and the ENVI, REGI, CULT, LIBE, AFCE and FEMM Committees; specific requests should be submitted by the Committees and Subcommittees concerned in connection with each one of these visits, accompanied by justifications and financial statements and respecting the rules in force concerning travel periods, duration of missions (including journey times) and quotas;

General principles and budgetary considerations

- recalled that Parliament's resolution of 26 October 2011 on the draft General Budget of the EU for 2012 specified that in "times of increasing financial difficulties for numerous Europeans and ongoing austerity policies, Parliament should show an example of restraint by reducing its travel costs; stressed that Parliament's resolution asked the Bureau to create conditions for making savings of 5% in all kind of travel expenditure including delegations of committees and interparliamentary delegations" and that this guiding principle should always be taken into account when considering all mission requests for Members and staff, without jeopardizing Parliament's capacity to fulfil its legal and political obligations as set out in the Treaties and in international law instruments;
- noted that the overall cost for travel by parliamentary committees outside the three places of work for 2012 was estimated at EUR 5.393.567;
- underlined that, where parliamentary committees decided to cancel one of their missions and replace it with another, the new request should either state clearly that the financial implications were the same as for the cancelled mission or include a new financial statement; equally, it should include information on any modification in the number of participating Members and the duration, including journey times, of the mission;
- insisted that committee visits to the agencies for which they were responsible should, in line with Article 2.2a of the applicable rules, be restricted to a maximum of three

Members, and should be scheduled during the weeks set aside for external parliamentary activity;

- emphasised the importance of cooperation between the parliamentary committees and the interparliamentary delegations in their work, in particular, in terms of making efforts to coordinate their respective missions to third countries;
- requested the various committees, in application of Article 9 of the applicable Rules, to forward to the President, prior to the various visits, the respective programmes (indicating their total duration, including journey times), and providing at the same time full information concerning the number of Members participating (quota) and of accompanying secretariat and group staff;
- noted the satisfaction expressed by the Conference of Presidents on 8 December 2011 when it welcomed the fact that its decision stipulating that no accredited assistants of Members would participate in parliamentary committee delegations was included in the revised rules on travel by Committee delegations adopted by the Bureau on 14 November 2011;
- took the view that committee visits to countries holding the EU Council Presidency were not always justified; invited the committees in their future planning to favour meetings with the relevant representatives of the Presidency in the framework of regular committee meetings instead, which would thereby also allow an increased participation of Members;

Specific comments

- welcomed the fact that a number of recurrent activities had now been included in the annual travel programme by parliamentary committee delegations;
- noted that, in the below indicated six cases, the precise dates (and in some cases, destinations) for the conferences or meetings in question had not yet been confirmed, and underlined that these requests, with the relevant financial statements, had to be resubmitted for consideration on an individual basis once this information became available; further underlined, as far as the two PECH requests were concerned, that these visits should be drawn from the committee's annual quota for travel outside the

EU, which should be respected; noted, as far as the ENVI request was concerned, that the committee had foreseen sending an ad hoc delegation to the Climate Change Conference in question and recalled that this was not in line with the rules on ad hoc delegations; took the view that delegations to annual events should, in principle, be drawn from within the annual quota(s) of the committee(s) concerned:

- ENVI: request to participate in the "18th Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change";
 - ITRE: request to participate in the "7th Internet Governance Forum";
 - PECH: request to participate in the annual meeting of the "International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas" (ICCAT);
 - PECH: request to participate in the annual meeting of the "Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission" (WCPFC);
 - DEVE: request to participate in the "FAO Committee on World Food Security" in Rome for 3 days between 15 and 20 October 2012 (a group week; the dates for this event have been set by the UN as the organising body);
 - EMPL: request to participate in the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations in New York between 8 and 12 February 2012 (a group week; the dates for this event have been set by the UN as the organising body).
- noted that the PETI Committee had foreseen to request only fact-finding visits of maximum 3 Members to EU Member States as foreseen under Rule 202(5) of the Rules of Procedure, and that the number and destinations of these missions would depend on incoming petitions during 2012; endorsed this approach in principle, while pointing out that the PETI committee would have to submit individual requests for each of these missions, which should respect the rules in force concerning travel periods, journey times and quotas;
 - noted that the AFET Committee had requested that its proposed visit to Serbia be counted under the quota for travel inside the EU and applicant countries; endorsed the request in principle, on condition that Serbia had been granted candidate status by the time of travel; additionally noted that combining this mission with a possible visit with

the SEDE Subcommittee to Kosovo - as suggested in the draft programme - would imply that the visit would be counted under the extra-EU quota;

- noted that, as a general principle, security arrangements for delegations in third countries should be consistent with the principles laid down in the Rules on travel by Committee delegations outside the three places of work of the EP and notably in line with the attached Protocol on emergencies arising during official travel activities outside the three places of work, and that delegations were only authorised to travel on the condition that the security situation on the ground was satisfactory; insisted on the need to assess security situation aspects thoroughly prior to each departure, on the basis of all available information, including from the EEAS (SitCen);
- stressed that, more specifically, the SEDE Subcommittee's proposed travel to Afghanistan and Somalia should only take place if the security situation on the ground in those places proved to be satisfactory, and that a decision on these visits would be taken at a later stage on the basis of information from the EEAS (including SitCen);
- invited the EMPL, ITRE and PECH Committees, in line with the comments expressed above on visits to agencies, to find new dates for their proposed visits to, respectively, the European Training Foundation and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (EMPL), the European Network and Information Security Agency (ITRE) and the Fisheries Control Agency (PECH);
- noted that the AGRI Committee's proposed visit to Argentina (and Uruguay) appeared to focus upon issues under INTA's competence; invited the AGRI Committee to provide additional justification for such a visit prior to any authorisation being given;
- noted that the AFCO Committee had foreseen a visit to France to discuss the 'national democracy and constitutional identity' and to the US to discuss the 'political, judicial and civil society's view of the EU'; requested the committee to provide more detailed justifications for these proposed visits prior to any authorisation to travel being given;
- gave a favourable opinion on the draft programme of parliamentary committee delegations for 2012, under the conditions set out above;

- underlined its view that, with the exception of the aspects mentioned above, in principle no further requests for exceptional derogations for committee travel should be approved during the course of 2012.

16. Draft programme of public hearings by parliamentary committees in 2012 - Letter from Mr LEHNE, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs

The Bureau, without debate

- noted the following document:
 - a letter from Mr LEHNE, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, dated 17 November 2011, submitting the 2012 draft annual programme of public hearings in parliamentary committees (PE 476.786/BUR and annexes);
 - a letter from Mr MULDER, Chair of the Committee on Budgetary Control, dated 15 November 2011, providing additional information on the public hearings planned by that Committee (PE 476.786/BUR and annex);
 - a letter from Mr LEHNE, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, dated 29 September 2011 (PE 476.788/BUR;
- recalled the rules in force governing public hearings in parliamentary committees and in particular that:
 - each committee was entitled to hear a maximum of 16 guests each year and each subcommittee a maximum of 8 guests each year, whose expenses would be covered;
 - specific individual authorisation should be requested at the latest four weeks in advance for hearings not included in the annual programme, although in urgent cases, the President could grant authorisation without submitting the request to the Bureau;

Calendar and time of public hearings in parliamentary committees in 2012

- welcomed the fact that Committees were committed to schedule their public hearings during committee weeks or on days foreseen for committee meetings and recalled that any hearing scheduled to take place outside the normal committee meetings would require a specific individual authorisation from the Bureau, in line with Article 2(3) of the applicable rules, considering the fact that such hearings would generate additional costs (e.g. interpretation);

- welcomed the fact that all parliamentary committees except two, the Committee on Transport and the Committee on Petitions, were able to submit a draft programme of public hearings, and invited the two aforementioned committees to submit to the Bureau their draft programmes at the earliest possible opportunity, noting that the European Commission had submitted its Work Programme 2012 on 15 November 2011;
- recalled that according to Article 2(2) of the rules on public hearings, committees were requested to submit a draft annual programme of hearings envisaged at the start of each year, accompanied by appropriate supporting documents and any available information (topic, justification, dates and number of guests);
- stressed that any committees, which were not able at this stage to submit the necessary information and in particular to indicate the date and time of a hearing, as well as the number of paid guests, would have to ask for an individual authorisation in line with Article 2(3) of the Rules on Public Hearing at the latest four weeks in advance of the date of the hearing;
- noted that, in certain cases, the overall number of planned paid guests submitted by the committees exceeded the maximum annual quota of sixteen paid guests and invited all committees and subcommittees to stay within their maximum annual quota of sixteen paid guests for committees and eight paid guests for subcommittees;
- approved the draft programme in question, subject to the above mentioned conditions and invited the President to inform the Conference of Committee Chairs accordingly;

General comments on application of the rules

- took note of a letter from Mr LEHNE, dated 29 September 2011, requesting, on behalf of the Conference of Committee Chairs, certain modifications and flexibility for the application of the rules governing the organisation of public hearings in parliamentary committees;
- noted that the objective of the said rules was twofold: first, to allow the Bureau, as the

body empowered to authorise committee hearings, to take note in advance and, second, to authorise the necessary expenditure for such hearings, especially for any invited experts, in line with Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure on the duties of the Bureau;

- noted that Article 2(2) of the rules on public hearings required committees to submit a draft annual programme of hearings envisaged at the beginning of each year, accompanied by appropriate supporting documents and any available information (such as topic, justification, dates and number of guests);
- noted that, during the current legislative term, the Bureau had applied, in practice, adequate flexibility allowing the committees to plan their hearings in a manner which took account of topical and unpredictable events;
- noted that the current rules also allowed, in urgent cases, an authorisation by the President (Article 2(3)) and that this provision had been used on several occasions during the current legislative term;
- agreed with the Conference of Committee Chairs that such flexibility as described above was necessary also in the second parliamentary half-term so as to allow the committees to react to topical and unpredictable political issues; noted, however, that in view of the fact that the European Commission normally approved its annual Work Programme for the following year in November, certain amount of annual planning should be feasible to all parliamentary committees;
- invited the incoming Bureau to apply the rules governing public hearings organised by parliamentary committees in this flexible manner and to revert back to this matter if necessary.

17. Request from the Committee Economic and Monetary Affairs to authorize a public hearings on "Sovereign debt crisis in Europe: assessing the current European instruments - addressing the challenges ahead" on 23 January 2012 in Brussels - Letter from Ms BOWLES, Chair of the committee concerned

The Bureau, without debate

- noted the following document:
 - a letter from Ms BOWLES, Chair of the committee concerned, dated 29 November 2011, requesting authorization to hold on 23 January 2012 in Brussels a public hearing entitled "Sovereign debt crisis in Europe: assessing the current European instruments - addressing the challenges ahead" (PE 476.784/BUR and draft program);
- noted that the requested hearing was scheduled to take place on 23 January 2012 during the regular Committee meeting, and that the Bureau had not yet approved the 2012 list of public hearings in parliamentary committees; in any event, the requested hearing did not feature in the 2012 draft list submitted by the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and that therefore an authorization from the Bureau in line with Article 2 of the Rules on Public Hearings was necessary;
- took note that the request for authorisation had been submitted timely at least four weeks in advance as required by Article 2(3) of the applicable Rules on Public Hearings and that any costs incurred by the invited experts would be covered by the Committee's 2012 annual quota of sixteen paid guests;
- granted the request and informed the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs that any costs incurred by the invited experts would be covered by the Committee's 2012 annual quota of sixteen paid guests.

18. Establishment of a European Parliament Prize in the name of József Antall senior and Henryk Slawik - Letter from Jan ZAHRADIL, President of the ECR group

The Bureau, with debate

- noted the following documents:
 - a letter from Mr ZAHRADIL, Chair of the ECR group, dated 7 November 2011 (PE 476.730/BUR/Compl);
 - a letter from Mr ZAHRADIL, Chair of the ECR group, dated 27 September 2011 (PE 476.730/BUR and annex);
 - a letter from President BUZEK to Mr ZAHRADIL, Chair of the ECR Group, dated 23 September 2011 (PE 469.490/CPG/REP);
 - a letter from Mr ZAHRADIL, Chair of the ECR Group, dated 28 June 2011 (PE 469.490/CPG);
- recalled that the matter was discussed by the Conference of Presidents at its meeting of 29 September 2011 and referred to the Bureau for decision;
- took note of the plenary resolution of 10 May 2011 on the European Parliament's discharge for 2009, which, in paragraph 92, invited the Bureau "to refrain from initiating the funding of new prizes" and "to prepare a review of existing prize schemes";
- held an exchange of views with the participation of the President, Ms KRATSA-TSAGAROPOULOU, Mr CHICHESTER, Mr WIELAND, Ms PODIMATA, Ms ROTH-BEHRENDT, Ms DURANT and Mr ROUČEK Vice-Presidents and Ms LULLING and Ms GERINGER DE OEDENBERG Quaestors;

- noted the expression of support for the proposed prize by Mr CHICHESTER, Vice-President;
- decided against the creation of a new European Parliament prize in honour of Henryk SŁAWIK and József ANTALL senior.

19. Urgent matters and any other business

There were none.

20. Items for information

20.1 Interinstitutional mail

None

20.2 External mail

None

20.3 Internal mail

- Handbook on the European Parliament Mediator for international parliament child abduction (PE 476.845/BUR).

21. Date and place of next meeting

The Bureau

- decided to hold its next meeting on **Tuesday, 10 January 2012, from 18:00 to 20:00 hours**, in **Room 06B001** in the **Paul-Henri Spaak** in **Brussels**.

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The meeting closed at 22:23 hours

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