CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS

MINUTES

of the ordinary meeting of Thursday

23 April 2015

Paul-Henri SPAAK Building, Room 06B01

Brussels
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of the ordinary meeting of

Thursday, 23 April 2015

from 11:00 to 13:00 hours

Paul-Henri SPAAK Building, Room 06B 01

Brussels

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CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS

MINUTES

of the meeting of Thursday 23 April 2015

from 11:00 to 13:00 hours

Brussels

The meeting opened at 11.06 hours with Mr Martin SCHULZ, President of the European Parliament, in the chair

Present

Mr SCHULZ, President

Political Group Chairs

Mr ZWIEFKA (Acting)  (EPP)
Mr GUERRERO SALOM (Acting)  (S&D)
Mr KAMALL  (ECR)
Mr VERHOFSTADT  (ALDE)
Ms ZIMMER  (GUE/NGL)
Mr LAMBERTS (Co-Chair)  (Greens/EFA)
Mr BORRELLI (Co-Chair)  (EFDD)

Also Present

Mr WELLE, Secretary-General
Ms RATTI, Deputy Secretary-General
Invited:

Mr BUZEK, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs

Members invited to item 5 of the Agenda

Ms HÜBNER, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs
Ms REGNER, Member of the Committee on Legal Affairs

Were invited for item 5

Mr TIMMERMANS, 1st Vice-President of the European Commission
accompanied by

Mr SMULDER
Ms SUTTON
Mr SMIT
Mr LEARDINI
Mr JOHNSTONE
Mr PINE

The Council¹
represented by
Ms TUTS
Mr KERLEROUX

The Commission¹
represented by
Mr LEARDINI
Mr PINE

The Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy¹
represented by
Mr CASTRO
Mr LEVINE

The Economic and Social Committee¹
represented by
Mr MITUTA

The Committee of the Regions¹
represented by
Mr KOSJEK

Office of the President

Mr WINKLER
Mr MACHMER
Ms WOLLNY
Mr MASUR
Mr DIRRIG

¹ Present for items 1-3
Ms PELZ
Ms NOYON
Mr KOEKKOEK

Office of the Secretary-General
Mr MANGOLD
Mr SORENSEN
Ms FERNANDEZ PERLES
Ms FREDSGAARD

Office of the Deputy Secretary-General
Mr LANE
Mr ALEIXO
Mr NATSCHERADETZ

Secretariat
DG Presidency (PRES)
Mr KNUDSEN/Ms ROBSON/Mr WICKER

DG Internal Policies (IPOL)
Mr RIBERA d’ALCALA/Ms VANDENBOSCH/Mr CHIOCCHETTI
Ms SAILIS/Mr PACHECO/Ms ZULETA DE LEMOS/ILARIO

DG External Policies (EXPO)
Mr AGUIRIANO

DG European Parliamentary Research Services (EPRS)
Mr TEASDALE

DG Communication (COMM)
Ms LAHOUSSE/Mr DUCH GUILLOT

DG Translation (TRAD)
Mr MAVRIČ

DG Interpretation and Conferences (INTE)
Ms WALTER-DROP

DG Finance (FINS)
Mr KLETHI

1 Present for items 1-3 and item 5
2 Present for items 1-3
3 Present for item 5
DG Innovation and Technical Support (ITEC)  
Mr VILELLA

Legal Service (SJ)  
Ms GOMEZ-LEAL

Directorate for relations with political groups  
Mr SCHWETZ

Secretariat of the Bureau  
Mr TJIORKAS

Political groups

Mr RYNGAERT/Ms SCRIBAN/Ms LASKAVÁ (EPP)  
Ms BAPTISTA/Mr BURU/Ms PEREIRA (S&D)  
Mr BARRETT/Mr BOYD (ECR)  
Mr BEELS/Ms COLERA-GARZÓN/Mr RASMUSSEN/McLAUGHLIN (ALDE)  
Ms D’ALIMONTE/Ms LEPOLA (GUE/NGL)  
Ms TSETSI/Mr DENKINGER/Mr LINAZASORO (Greens/EFA)  
Mr VAUGIER/Ms ALBERTINI (EFDD)  
Mr BORDEZ (NI)

Mr HILLER, Mr ROHLJE, Ms SCHADE and Mr MENEGHINI acted as secretaries to the meeting.
1. Adoption of the draft agenda

The Conference of Presidents

- noted the draft agenda (PE 548.159/CPG) and adopted it in the form shown in these minutes.
2. Approval of the Draft Minutes of the meeting of 12 March 2015

The Conference of Presidents

- noted and approved the draft Minutes of the meeting of 12 March 2015, held in Strasbourg (PE 548.112/CPG/rev and annex).
3. Adoption of the final draft agenda for April II part-session (from 27 to 30 April 2015) - Scheduling of key debates in plenary

The Conference of Presidents

- noted the following documents:
  
  • the draft agenda for the April II part-session (from 27 to 30 April 2015) in Strasbourg, as adopted by the Conference of Presidents on 12 March 2015;
  
  • a table dated 23 April 2015 summarising committee and delegation meetings planned for the April II part-session (from Monday 27 to Thursday 30 April 2015) in Strasbourg;

- took note of the final draft agenda for the April II part-session (from 27 to 30 April 2015) in Strasbourg;

- held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr ZWIEFKA, acting Chair of the EPP Group, Mr GUERRERO SALOM, acting Chair of the S&D Group, Mr KAMALL, Chair of the ECR Group, Mr VERHOFSTADT, Chair of the ALDE Group, Ms ZIMMER, Chair of the GUE/NGL Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, and Mr BORRELLI, Co-Chair of the EFDD Group, and adopted the final draft agenda with the following modification:

  **Wednesday 29 April 2015**

  - decided, after a vote, to amend the title of a statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative to now read "Killing of students in Kenya by terror group Al-Shabaab" (with resolution);

The Conference of Presidents also

- heard Mr GUERRERO SALOM, acting Chair of the S&D Group, request that Council and Commission statements on precarious employment contracts be put on the plenary agenda;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr ZWIEFKA, acting Chair of the EPP Group, Mr KAMALL, Chair of the ECR Group, Mr VERHOFSTADT, Chair of the ALDE Group, Ms ZIMMER, Chair of the GUE/NGL Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, and Mr BORRELLI, Co-Chair of the EFDD Group;

- heard the President propose to invite the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs to consider the matter, with a view to preparing a plenary debate at a subsequent part-session;

- agreed with the President's proposal;

- further heard Mr BORRELLI, Co-Chair of the EFDD Group, request the addition of an oral question for the plenary agenda concerning transparency on European funds information on the Capocolonna archaeological site in Crotone, Italy;

- agreed, after an exchange of views with the participation of Mr ZWIEFKA, acting Chair of the EPP Group, Mr VERHOFSTADT, Chair of the ALDE Group, and Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, to invite the Committee on Budgetary Control to consider the matter and report back to the Conference of Presidents.
4. Communications by the President

4.1 Guest-speakers in Plenary

The Conference of Presidents

- heard the President report that, following suggestions submitted by the Group Chairs, he had invited Mr BAN Ki-MOON, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to address the plenary on 27 May 2015, and Mr ELBEGDORJ, President of Mongolia, for the June plenary session; further heard the President inform that he had invited FELIPE VI, King of Spain, to address the plenary after summer.

4.2 Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments

The Conference of Presidents

- heard the President report that he had attended the Conference of Speakers of EU Parliaments in Rome, Italy, on 21 April 2015, at which agreement had been reached on key principles on how to organise the Conference established under Article 13 of the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance in the Economic and Monetary Union ('Fiscal Compact'); further heard him note that the final text of the Presidency conclusions would be circulated to the Group Chairs, as soon as it became available.

4.3 Extra-ordinary meeting of the European Council on the situation in the Mediterranean

The Conference of Presidents

- heard the President note that he would address the European Council on 23 April 2015, and that his speech would cover the main points raised in the relevant plenary resolutions of 2013 and 2014, notably the need to strengthen immediately the capabilities and operational reach of the Frontex coordinated operation Triton with a view to humanitarian search and rescue operations, the need for a holistic EU approach to immigration, refugees, asylum seekers and temporary protection, the development of an EU-wide system of legal migration, the need for a fair sharing of responsibilities between Member States, and the overall strategy for cooperation with third countries;
- held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr ZWIEFKA, acting Chair of the EPP Group, Mr GUERRERO SALOM, acting Chair of the S&D Group, Mr KAMALL, Chair of the ECR Group, Mr VERHOFSTADT, Chair of the ALDE Group, Ms ZIMMER, Chair of the GUE/NGL Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, and Mr BORRELLI, Co-Chair of the EFDD Group;

- endorsed the approach outlined by the President.
A. DECISIONS/EXCHANGE OF VIEWS

5. Inter-institutional relations, in particular annual and multi-annual programming and revision of the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making - Exchange of views with Mr Timmermans, First Vice-President of the European Commission

The Conference of Presidents

- took note of the following documents:

  * a letter dated 19 February 2015 from the Presidency-in-Office of the Council on the Council's 'Initiative to complement the Common Understanding on delegated acts as regards the consultation of experts' (PE 553.166/CPG and annex);
  * a note dated 3 March 2015 from the President of the European Parliament on the revision of the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-making (PE 548.141/CPG);
  * a letter dated 23 March 2015 from Mr SVOBODA, Chair of the Committee on Legal Affairs, submitting a non-paper on the revision of the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making (PE 553.178/CPG and annex);
  * a letter dated 22 April 2015 from Ms HÜBNER, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, submitting a non-paper on the revision of the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making (PE 553.222/CPG and annex);
  * a technical document on the 2003 Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making (PE 548.164/CPG and annexes);
  * contributions from the political groups on the revision of the Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making (PE 553.220/CPG);
  * a note dated 21 April 2015 from the President of the European Parliament on negotiating a revised Inter-institutional Agreement on Better Law-Making (PE 553.221/CPG);
- heard the President welcome Mr TIMMERMANS, First Vice-President of the European Commission, and briefly introduce the matter by recalling, inter alia, that one overall objective of the revision of the Inter-institutional Agreement (IIA) on Better Law-Making was to align the IIA with the legislative environment created by the Treaty of Lisbon, and to clarify grey areas created by the latter;

- held an exchange of views with the participation of Mr ZWIEFKA, acting Chair of the EPP Group, Mr GUERRERO SALOM, acting Chair of the S&D Group, Mr KAMALL, Chair of the ECR Group, Mr VERHOFSTADT, Chair of the ALDE Group, Ms ZIMMER, Chair of the GUE/NGL Group, Mr LAMBERTS, Co-Chair of the Greens/EFA Group, and Mr BORRELLI, Co-Chair of the EFDD Group, focused, inter alia, on the following issues:

  - Multi-annual programming and long-term agenda-setting;
  - the Commission's cooperation with Parliament on its annual programme;
  - transparency of the legislative process;
  - addressing the full legislative cycle;
  - better regulation and REFIT instruments;
  - reciprocal inter-institutional access to meetings and documents;
  - a common inter-institutional register of legislative documents including delegated and implementing acts;
  - impact assessment and ex-post evaluation;
  - transposition and gold-plating;
  - inter-institutional consultation and justification in case of envisaged withdrawal of a legislative proposal;
  - the follow-up of Parliament's initiatives;
  - Parliament's role in the European Semester;
  - Parliament's prerogatives concerning the negotiation and provisional application or suspension of international agreements;

- heard Mr TIMMERMANS, First Vice-President of the European Commission, confirm that the main objective of the revision of the IIA was to bring current practices in line with the Treaties, and that he saw a strong willingness in the three Institutions to find agreement on how to achieve a higher level of transparency, efficiency, and accountability in the
legislative process; also heard him note that the issues raised by the Group Chairs would be taken into account in the drafting of the Commission proposal; further heard him stress, inter alia, that impact assessments could never replace political decisions, and that the Institutions should remain fully responsible for their own impact assessments.

- heard the President conclude the exchange of views by emphasising the main points of the debate and of the written contributions submitted by the political groups, which would serve as the basis for Parliament's negotiation position, in particular:

  - further development of the privileged relationship between Parliament and Commission in programming;
  - Parliament's access to Council meetings and documents, and Commission expert meetings;
  - creation of a common inter-institutional register of legislative documents including a functional delegated acts register;
  - priority of unblocking the alignment of pending pre-Lisbon files;
  - interpret better regulation as smarter regulation, including proper stakeholder consultations and evaluation of the 'cost of non-Europe';
  - develop a common impact assessment methodology to ensure independent and objective impact assessments;
  - full responsibility of each institution for its own impact assessments;
  - ex-post evaluation, the systematic use of correlation tables and reporting on gold-plating;
  - a systematic procedure to ensure that all of Parliament's prerogatives in the negotiation of international agreements are fully ensured;
  - a proper follow-up to Article 225 TFEU requests by Parliament;
  - democratic legitimacy of the European Semester, in particular with regard to the Annual Growth Survey;
  - adequate inter-institutional consultations in the event of different views on the choice of legal procedure or legal basis;
improvement of the flow of information from the three Institutions to national parliaments to ensure better scrutiny of the subsidiarity principle and of their governments' negotiation positions.

- heard the President stress, inter alia, that the revision of the IIA should not in any way compromise Parliament's current arrangements with the other Institutions, in particular the arrangements laid down in the Framework Agreement with the Commission, and that it should be clarified that the European Council should not intervene in the legislative process; further heard him note that he would send a letter to Mr TIMMERMANS outlining the conclusions of today's debate;

- heard the President also note that the Conference of Presidents had to decide on the final structures and mandate for Parliament to negotiate the revision of the IIA, at a subsequent meeting.
B. DECISIONS WITHOUT DEBATE *

6. Request from parliamentary committees to draw-up own-initiative reports under Rule 52, request for the application of Rule 54, and related requests *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter dated 11 March 2015 from Mr BUZEK, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs (CCC), submitting requests from parliamentary committees for authorisation to draw up own-initiative reports under Rule 52 of the Rules of Procedure, and for the application of Rule 54 (PE 553.135/CPG and annexes);

- took note of a letter dated 20 March 2015, co-signed by Mr GUALTIERI, Chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Mr LAMASSOURE, Chair of the Special Committee on Tax Rulings and Other Measures Similar in Nature and Effect, requesting a change in attribution of one report (PE 553.160/CPG).

- took note of the request for authorisation for four legislative own-initiative reports, and seven non-legislative own-initiative reports referred to under heading C of the above-mentioned letter, and authorised them to be drawn up;

- noted that the Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee (FEMM) and the Employment and Social Affairs Committee (EMPL) had agreed to associate the EMPL Committee under Rule 54 to a non-legislative own-initiative report of the FEMM Committee, entitled "Women domestic workers and carers in the EU", included in the list of INIs requested above, and authorised the application of Rule 54 as requested;

- took note of the request for authorisation for one strategic report from the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) entitled "The situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration" under heading E of the letter above, which is subject to automatic authorisation;

- recalled that, at its meeting on 12 March 2015, the Conference of Presidents heard Mr WEBER, Chair of the EPP Group, request that authorisation be granted for the LIBE Committee to appoint co-rapporteurs on the above-mentioned report, and further recalled
that there was a majority in favour of granting that request, but that a formal decision would have to await the proper procedure at the following meeting;

- **authorised** the LIBE request for co-rapporteurs of the above-mentioned strategic report;

- further **noted** the letter dated 20 March 2015, co-signed by Mr GUALTIERI, Chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs (ECON) and Mr LAMASSOURE, Chair of the Special Committee on Tax Rulings and Other Measures Similar in Nature and Effect (TAXE), requesting a change in attribution from ECON to TAXE of the report entitled "Inquiry Report on Tax Fairness in Europe" (2015/2009(INI)), and **authorised** the request.
The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter dated 11 March 2015 from Mr BUZEK, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, forwarding the results on the screening of current files in view of the April II 2015 part-session (PE 548.168/CPG);

- recalled its decision of 19 April 2012 to request the competent services to carry out an on-going screening procedure of upcoming legislative proposals in order to avoid placing on the plenary agenda any vote(s) leading to a first-reading agreement on dossiers where such decisions might be legally questionable;

- recalled its decision of 27 November 2014 to request a monthly overview of the delegated acts (and draft RPS measures) under scrutiny, indicating also any possible action taken by committees;

- noted that no legal concerns were raised in relation to any of the dossiers scheduled for vote during this part-session.
8. **Overview of delegated acts and draft RPS measures currently under EP scrutiny**

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- **took note** of a note dated 16 April 2015 from the Secretary-General, providing an overview of the state of play on delegated and implementing acts at 19 December 2014 (PE 553.211/CPG and annex);

- **recalled** the horizontal guidance it adopted on 19 April 2012 on the inclusion of delegated acts in the basic legislative act; consequently, **maintained** its request to the Conference of Committee Chairs to carry out a monthly screening of the agreements reached;

- **recalled** its decision of 27 November 2014 to request a monthly overview of the delegated acts (and draft RPS measures) under scrutiny, indicating also any possible action taken by committees.
9. Proposal for the calendar of part-sessions in 2016 *

This item was postponed to a subsequent meeting.
Committee missions within the EU, candidate countries and the EEA countries

10. Joint request from the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the SINEEA Delegation to send an ad hoc delegation to the 4th Northern Dimension Parliamentary Forum, taking place in Reykjavik, Iceland, from 10 to 11 May 2015 *

This item was postponed to a subsequent meeting.
11. Requests from the Special Committee on Tax Rulings and Other Measures Similar in Nature or Effect for authorisation for 6 missions in May and June 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- **took note** of the letter dated 9 April 2015 from Mr LAMASSOURE, Chair of the Special Committee on Tax Rulings and Other Measures Similar in Nature or Effect (TAXE), requesting authorisation for eight Members of that committee (including the two co-rapporteurs, two shadow rapporteurs and the chair out of quota) to travel to each of the following five EU countries (PE 553.187/CPG, annexes and financial statement):
  
  • Brussels, Belgium, 12 May 2015,
  • Luxembourg, 18 May 2015,
  • Dublin, Ireland, 28 May 2015,
  • The Hague, Netherlands, 29 May 2015,
  • London, United Kingdom, 18 June 2015,

and, outside the EU, to:

  • Bern, Switzerland, 22 May 2015;

- **recalled** that on 12 February 2015, the European Parliament decided to set up a special committee on tax rulings and other measures similar in nature or effect, composed of 45 Members, with an initial term of office of six months and two co-rapporteurs for its final report;

- **recalled** that, under Parliament’s Rules of Procedure, the Bureau is the body responsible for final authorisation of committee missions outside Parliament’s three places of work, within the EU, the candidate countries and the EEA countries and that the Conference of Presidents decides on missions outside these countries;

- **recalled** that, as a general principle and in line with previous practice, the special committee’s quota for missions within the European Union, candidate countries and the
EEA countries, was calculated in proportion to the length of the mandate based on the committee’s maximum quota;

- further recalled that, pursuant to the applicable Rules, the committee’s maximum quota for missions within the European Union, candidate countries and EEA countries would be 25 Members for a full year and, therefore, half this number for a term of office of six months; noted, however, that the committee currently proposed to send 35 Members (plus chair out of quota) to places within the European Union;

- noted that it could not be excluded that the term of office of the special committee would be extended and that, therefore, the committee’s quota was to be considered with a degree of flexibility;

- recalled further that, pursuant to the Rules in force, committees shall undertake missions during the weeks set aside for external parliamentary activities and that for missions undertaken outside weeks set aside for external parliamentary activities, a limited language regime that may not exceed interpretation into one language from the delegation profile shall be applied;

- noted in that respect, that only the mission to the UK was foreseen to take place on days set aside for external parliamentary activities, while the other missions were to take place on days which coincide with days set aside for political group activities (Belgium, Monday, 12 May), for Parliament’s part-session (Luxembourg, Monday 18 May), for parliamentary committee activities (Ireland, Thursday, 28 May) and on days without parliamentary activities (Switzerland, Friday, 22 May, Netherlands, Friday, 29 May);

- in the light of the above, while also taking account of the specific requirements related to the temporary committee, recommended to authorise the request for the missions to Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, for a total of eight Members, including the two co-rapporteurs and the chair out of quota, provided that for the missions to Belgium, Luxembourg, Ireland and the Netherlands a limited language regime of one language only applied, on the understanding that Members would return from Luxembourg on time for the beginning of the part-session in Strasbourg on 18 May; and forwarded this recommendation to the Bureau for final decision;
authorised, on an exceptional basis, the sending of an ad hoc delegation of a total of eight Members, including the two co-rapporteurs and the chair, to Bern, Switzerland, provided that a limited language regime of one language only applied.
Commission missions outside the European Union

12. Request from the Committee on Budgetary Control for authorisation to travel to Washington D.C. USA, from 15 to 19 June 2015 *

This item was postponed to a subsequent meeting.
Activities of inter-parliamentary delegations

13. Request from the Delegation for relations with Japan to hold its 35th Inter-Parliamentary Meeting in Strasbourg, France, from 29 to 30 April 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter dated 20 March 2015 from Mr JEŽEK, Chair of the Delegation for Relations with Japan, on the above-mentioned subject (PE 553.157/CPG, annexes and financial statement);

- noted that, in accordance with the relevant rules, all inter-parliamentary meetings required prior authorisation from the Conference of Presidents, based on requests to be submitted in good time;

- noted that the IPM was included in the draft programme of activities by standing inter-parliamentary delegations for the first half of 2015, to be held in Brussels on the Tuesday and Wednesday of either week 9 (24 to 25 February 2015) or week 13 (24 to 25 March 2015);

- recalled its decision of 15 January 2015 to authorise the meetings scheduled for days set aside for parliamentary committee activities in Brussels, while noting that interpretation was subject to availability in line with the relevant provisions of the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism;

- noted that according to the rules governing the holding of meetings simultaneously with plenary, delegations may meet in Strasbourg on Wednesdays from 15.00 to 19.00 and on Thursday from 9.00 until voting time;

- authorised the request, provided that the IPM did not coincide with a key debate and that the programme was in conformity with the Rules.
14. Request from the Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly to hold meetings of its Enlarged Bureau and Working Group on Migration in Riga, Latvia, from 15 to 16 May 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter of 6 March 2015 from Mr JÁUREGUI ATONDO, Chair of the Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly, on the above-mentioned subject (PE 548.150/CPG, annexes and financial statement);

- noted that the meetings proposed were not included in the programme of activities of the standing inter-parliamentary delegations for the first six months of 2015, which was approved by the Conference of Presidents on 15 January 2015;

- recalled that, where possible, delegations shall undertake missions during the weeks set aside for external parliamentary activities;

- recalled further that, under the current rules and unless otherwise stipulated in international agreements, each standing inter-parliamentary delegation responsible for more than one country could request to hold more than one inter-parliamentary meeting per year, if the meeting proposed were to take place in one of the countries the delegation covers;

- recalled further that, according to the rules, Bureaus of multilateral assemblies shall meet on the margins of their plenary sessions or via video-conferences;

- noted that the Conference of Presidents had already approved two EuroLat Bureau and Working Group on Migration meetings for the first six month of 2015, which were included in the programme of activities of inter-parliamentary delegations (Panama, 16 to 19 March, and Brussels, 3 to 6 June 2015);

- noted that the dates for the additional meetings proposed in Riga, Latvia, coincided with days without parliamentary activities (Friday, 15 May 2015, and Saturday, 16 May 2015);

- nevertheless, authorised the meetings, on an exceptional basis.
15. Request from the Members of the Parliament's delegation to the PA-UfM for authorisation to participate in the XIth Plenary session of that Assembly and its related committee meetings taking place in Lisbon, Portugal, from 11 to 12 May 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- noted a letter dated 19 March 2015 from Mr SORU, Chair of the Committee on Political Affairs, Security, and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean (PA-UfM) on the above-mentioned subject (PE 553.155/CPG, annex and financial statement);

- noted that the mission was included in the draft programme of activities by standing inter-parliamentary delegations for the first half of 2015, albeit scheduled to take place from 14 to 15 March 2015;

- noted that the Portuguese Presidency of the Assembly had decided that the PA-UfM plenary session and its related committee meetings would now be held from 11 to 12 May 2015;

- noted that the new dates requested coincided with one day reserved for committee activities (Monday) and one day reserved for political group activities (Tuesday);

- recalled its decision of 15 January 2015 to urge Parliament's delegation to the PA-UfM to strive to meet on dates compatible with Parliament's calendar in the future;

- strongly urged the Members of Parliament's delegation to the PA-UfM to make every effort in the future to agree on meeting dates compatible with Parliament's calendar;

- authorised a delegation of up to 40 Members to participate in the above-mentioned meetings, on an exceptional basis, in view of the political importance for Parliament to be present at the meetings.
16. Request from the Delegation for relations with the Mashreq Countries for authorisation to hold the 12th EP-Lebanon Inter-parliamentary meeting in Lebanon from 17 to 19 June 2015 *

This item was postponed to a subsequent meeting.
17. Request from the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group to send an EP election observation delegation to observe the legislative and presidential elections in Burundi, to be held on 26 May and 26 June 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter dated 31 March 2015 from Mr BROK and Ms McAVAN, Co-Chairs of the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group, on the above-mentioned subject (PE 553.168/CPG, annex, Country Security Assessment, and two financial statements);

- recalled that these elections were included in the list of priority countries for European Parliament election observation delegations for the first half of 2015, as approved by the Conference of Presidents at its meeting of 15 January 2015;

- noted that the relevant criteria for the sending of an election observation mission, including the deployment of a standard EU Election Observation Mission, had been fulfilled;

- noted further the Country Security Assessment, which stated that the security situation remained highly volatile, and that tensions were mounting ahead of the elections, increasing the possibility of violence;

- noted that the Members of the EP delegation would be present in Burundi from 24 to 28 May 2015 and from 24 to 28 June 2015, and therefore would not be able to attend the plenary sessions on 27 May 2015 and on 24 June 2015;

- noted that the Implementing Provisions Governing Election Observation Delegations laid down that delegations may not be authorised if the dates coincide with Parliament's part-session, but that the Conference of Presidents may grant derogations from this general rule, based on a reasoned opinion from the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group;

- noted that the presidential elections on 26 June 2015 could possibly be followed by a
second round in July 2015;

- approved, on an exceptional basis, the sending of a delegation to observe the elections in question, to be composed of seven Members appointed by the political groups in accordance with the rolling d'Hondt system, which shall also apply to the non-attached Members, on the understanding that a limited language regime of interpretation into one language only applied, and invited the President to excuse the concerned Members from the plenary session on 27 May and on 24 June 2015, in line with Article 31(3) of the Implementing measures for the Statute of Members of the European Parliament; that approval being subject to the receipt of a security evaluation prior to departure, drawing on all relevant sources and based on a constant monitoring of the security situation in view of the volatility on the ground, presenting the conclusion that it would be sufficiently safe to travel to Burundi at the time.
Other delegations

18. Request to send a delegation of the European Parliament to the LIIIrd COSAC meeting to be held in Riga, Latvia from 31 May to 2 June 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter dated 14 April 2015, from Mr VALCÁRCEL SISO, Vice-President in charge of relations with national parliaments, and Ms HÜBNER, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, forwarding the minutes of the COSAC Chairpersons' meeting in Riga, Latvia, of 1 to 2 February 2015, and requesting that Parliament nominate a delegation of up to six members to participate in the forthcoming 53rd COSAC meeting, to be held in Riga, Latvia, from 31 May to 2 June 2015 (PE 553.152/CPG, annexes and financial statement);

- took note of the draft programme for the 53rd COSAC meeting;

- noted that the meeting dates coincided with one day without parliamentary activities (Sunday), one day reserved for committee activities (Monday), and one day reserved for political group activities (Tuesday);

- authorised the request to send a delegation of up to six members, to be nominated by the political groups in accordance with the rolling d'Hondt system, the delegation to be headed by one Vice-President with responsibility for relations with national parliaments and with COSAC, as well as the Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, in line with Rule 143 of Parliament's Rules of Procedure, the other members of the delegation were to be chosen in the light of the subjects to be discussed at the meeting, and should preferably be drawn from the ITRE, INTA, AFET and JURI committees.
Meetings of political groups

19. Request from the S&D Group for authorisation of a meeting of a delegation of the Group in Budapest, Hungary, from 11 to 13 June 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter dated 26 March 2015 from Mr PITTELLA, Chair of the S&D Group, on the above-mentioned subject (PE 553.195/CPG and financial statement);

- noted that the meeting dates coincided with one day reserved for the plenary session in Strasbourg (Thursday) and two days without parliamentary activities (Friday and Saturday);

- authorised the request, by way of exception.
20. Request from EPP Group to hold a meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 1 to 2 October 2015 *

The Conference of Presidents, without debate:

- took note of a letter dated 11 March 2015 signed by Mr BIESMANS, Deputy Secretary-General and Head of the Internal Organisation Service of the EPP Group, on the above-mentioned subject (PE 553.153/CPG and financial statement);

- noted that the meeting coincided with one day reserved for committee activities and political group activities (Thursday) and one day without parliamentary activities (Friday);

- authorised the request, by way of exception.
21. **Urgent matters and any other business**

There was none.
22. Items for information

22.1 Internal correspondence

The Conference of Presidents

- noted the following documents:

  • a letter dated 24 April 2015 from some Members of the EPP Group, S&D Group, ECR Group and the ALDE Group, requesting authorisation to send an EP ad hoc Delegation representing all the EP political groups to Venezuela during turquoise weeks (June or July) or week 39 (September) (PE 553.196/CPG);

  • a letter dated 11 March 2015 from Mr BUZEK, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, including the Guidelines adopted by the Conference of Committee Chairs on roll call voting for Committee reports (PE 553.133/CPG);

  • a letter dated 12 March 2015 from Mr BUZEK, Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs, regarding recent changes to the applicable rules on Committee missions, in particular travel outside the EU, the EEA and candidate countries (PE 553.143/CPG);

  • a letter dated 16 March 2015 from Mr BROK and Ms McAVAN, Co-chairs of the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group, on the invitation to observe the presidential elections, due to held in Kazakhstan, on 26 April 2015 (PE 553.151/CPG);

  • a letter dated 20 March 2015 from Mr BROK and Ms McAVAN, Co-chairs of the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) on ensuring a better follow-up of election observation missions and enhancing cooperation and coordination between DEG and Standing Delegations (PE 553.158/CPG);

  • a letter dated 20 March 2015 from Mr BROK and Ms McAVAN, Co-chairs of the Democracy Support and Election Coordination Group (DEG) with the 2014 Annual report adopted by DEG at its meeting on 12 February 2015 (PE 553.159/CPG);

  • a letter dated 20 March 2015 from Mr BROK, Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, with the conclusions of the 6th Inter-Parliamentary Conference (IPC) for the
Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) held in Riga, on 4-6 March 2015, under the Latvian Presidency (PE 553.161/CPG);

- a letter dated 23 April 2015 from Ms HÜBNER, Chair of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, on the interpretation of point 1 (a) of Annex XVI to Parliament's Rules of Procedure - Guidelines for the approval of the Commission (PE 553.190/CPG).

22.2 **Interinstitutional correspondence**

There was none.

22.3 **External correspondence**

There was none.
23. **Date and place of next meetings**

**The Conference of Presidents**

- noted that the next ordinary meeting would be held on Thursday 30 April 2015 from 10:00 to 12:00 hours in room R1,01, in the Louise-Weiss Building, in Strasbourg.

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The meeting closed at 13.18 hours