The 17th meeting of the EU-Armenia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee opened on 19 December 2017 at 3 p.m., jointly chaired by Armen Ashotyan and Sajjad Karim.

Items 1, 2 and 3: opening remarks and adoption of agenda

Co-chair Armen Ashotyan (Republican Party of Armenia - RPA) gave an opening address. By welcoming those present, he announced the start of the 17th meeting of the EU-Armenia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, and called the meeting symbolic as it immediately followed the signing of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement; he also noted that any activities and political decisions stemming from the need to ratify and implement the newly-signed Agreement would be specifically covered among the agenda items.

Ara Babloyan, President of the Armenian National Assembly, welcomed the guests and gave an opening speech. He stated that the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, signed in Brussels several days before, was an ambitious document of partnership between Armenia and the EU, which opened a new chapter in the history of bilateral relations. According to him, it is Armenia’s conscious choice to build and strengthen its statehood following the European model, and this is evidenced by the year-long close cooperation with the European institutions and the EU’s assistance to Armenia, aimed at institutional development, strengthening of state institutions, public administration reforms, the fight against corruption, consolidating the independence of the judiciary, guaranteeing of freedom of speech, etc. He stated with appreciation that within the past two years Armenia had succeeded in almost completely fulfilling its commitments assumed back in 2015. Mr Babloyan attached great importance to the enhancement of the partnership between the European Parliament and the National Assembly, and stressed that in his capacity as President of the National Assembly he would do his best to guarantee the active involvement of the Armenian Parliament in bilateral and multilateral constructive initiatives. He also addressed the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement issue, noting that Armenia shared its European partners’ aspirations for peace and sustainable development in the region. He stated that the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement once again served to reaffirm the EU’s
commitment to supporting the efforts invested by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs towards the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Co-Chair Sajjad Karim (European Conservative and Reformist Group) thanked Mr Ashotyan and the delegation members for the warm reception and partnership. He stressed that the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement signed in Brussels on November 24 would become a milestone in EU-Armenia bilateral relations. According to him, the Agreement is based on mutual loyalty, democracy, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Once ratified and effective, the Agreement will give a new impetus to the political dialogue and expand the scope of the economic partnership. Mr Karim noted that recent years had witnessed real reforms and sustainable progress in Armenia: Armenia was moving forward, benefiting from EU assistance. In 2017-2020, bilateral assistance would total EUR 160 million, the total for 2014-2017 being EUR 118.5 million.

Armen Ashotyan said that the common value system making the cornerstone of the EU-Armenia partnership assumed creating additional public value and public good for Armenian and European citizens. Armenia has strengthened its position within the Eastern Partnership as a free and sovereign country giving higher priority to security. Touching on settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Mr Ashotyan noted that Armenia could envision such a settlement exclusively under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs. According to him, while the EU plays a key role in all Armenian sectors - education, health, culture, aviation and energy - the political partnership, for both Armenia and the EU, means focusing on building a climate of long-lasting and durable peace. Mr Ashotyan also noted that Armenia was currently in the transition phase and this phase was characterised by enhancing democratic reforms focused on the Armenian citizen under parliamentary republican governance: it was to enable those citizens to lead an effective, safe and decent life that the political forces were creating an appropriate legal and political environment. Summing up, Mr Ashotyan extended his thanks to those present and wished them a productive work session.

2. The agenda was adopted.

3. Approval of minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the 16th meeting of the EU-Armenia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee, held in Strasbourg on 20 and 21 January 2016, were approved.

4. State of play of EU-Armenia relations

Karen Nazaryan, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia, noted on behalf of the Armenian Government that the year 2017 could be considered among the most significant chapters in the 25-year history of Armenia-EU relations, as it saw the signing of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement was signed, with Armenia expected to complete its ratification process by spring 2018. He also expressed the hope that the European partners would do their best to ensure smooth ratification of the Agreement. Mr Nazaryan outlined the sectoral reforms carried out in 2017, and noted that Armenia had succeeded in almost completely fulfilling its commitments assumed in 2015. Regarding visa liberalisation between EU and Armenia, the realisation of this EU-Armenia agenda item would be essential for the rapprochement of our societies. He believed that in this regard Armenia also expects that the European Parliament can play a key role in promoting this process by reaching out to the Member States and relevant EU milieux. Mr Nazaryan also presented Armenia’s approaches to
the Eastern Partnership format. Particularly, he noted that Armenia had originally supported that format and reiterated Armenia’s position that the Eastern Partnership aimed to promote cooperation in the region rather than create new dividing lines. The Armenian beneficiaries were actively taking up the opportunities opened up thereby, pushing forward the irreversible process of economic and political reform in Armenia. Mr Nazaryan also evoked regional stability, stating that Armenia would never make its unconditional commitment in terms of that issue dependent on any external factor or any other geopolitical developments or challenges. Such factors, he said, also included the illegal blockade of Armenia maintained by Turkey and the unsettled Nagorno-Karabakh issue. He stressed that Armenia would continue to adhere to its vision of strengthening peace and sustainable development. In conclusion, Mr Nazaryan expressed his gratitude to the European Parliament for reaffirming its commitment to the EU’s stance on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Finally, he thanked the participants and wished them every success in their discussions.

On behalf of the European Union, H.E. Piotr Świtalski, Ambassador, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Republic of Armenia, noted in his speech that EU-Armenia relations were currently exhibiting smooth progress on the issue of sectoral commitments, and that Armenia was the first among the Eastern Partnership countries to seek such an agreement with the EU. He gave assurances that the newly-signed agreement would act as a strong stimulus for reforms in Armenia. According to the Ambassador, late November should witness expansion of the scope of a new assistance programme for the development sectors in Armenia: the EU intended to increase its commitments by 20-25%. Mr Świtalski also noted that the EU had a clear agenda in Armenia, i.e. maintenance of peace and supporting reforms. Armenia, he said, has initiated an ambitious reform process targeting various sectors, such as human rights, rule of law, the economy, the business environment, foreign investment, etc, and the EU considered it a priority to support such processes, as being critical for Armenia’s future.

5. The Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement between the EU and Armenia: opportunities and challenges

Sajjad Karim said that the Agreement in question was an up-to-date, comprehensive and ambitious agreement and hoped that it would be ratified smoothly and take effect as soon as possible. He stated that the EU would pay special attention to small and medium-sized enterprises, promote and support clean and alternative energy sources, liberalise bilateral trade, lift any trade barriers, entitle Armenian companies to participate in EU public procurement tenders, etc. The public procurement legislation will be also amended to prevent discrimination and corruption; greater transparency in electoral processes will be ensured and partnership in fighting organised crime will be enhanced. The EU will also help Armenia to improve its nuclear security. Mr Karim also touched upon the Armenian export markets and noted that EU is already a large export partner for Armenia, accounting for almost 22% of the total. He also highlighted the existence of exchange and training schemes involving Armenian school and university students and lecturers in EU Member states under various programmes. He also addressed the issue of visa liberalisation for Armenia, noting in particular that since 2014 Armenian citizens have enjoyed a facilitated, more accessible process for granting visas. The EU and Armenia had also signed a Comprehensive Air Transport Agreement to pave the way for travel and new business opportunities. Mr Karim again evoked the assistance provided to Armenia, and stressed that if Armenia is to receive such assistance it is incumbent on it to fully comply with its commitments.
Naira Zohrabyan (Prosperous Armenia Party – PAP) thanked those present for the meeting and said that the Agreement had been signed at a crucial point for both Armenia and the EU. However, no agreement or code could be of any help if there is no will to conduct reforms. The Agreement is viewed as a key to success for Armenia and it depends on Armenia whether it will be able to use such a key correctly. Ms Zohrabyan argued that today both the EU and Armenia need profound changes and they should help each other to make such changes in the right way. As regards EU assistance regarding the Electoral Code, the past month had seen the Electoral Code amendment package put into circulation, the most important amendment being elimination of the ranked voting system. Ms Zohrabyan also addressed the security issue, noting in particular that on 7 April 2017 the European Parliament had adopted a resolution urging the EU institutions to establish contacts with unrecognised states and carry out educational and cultural programmes with their de facto authorities. She said that Nagorno-Karabakh was also a European territory, and that it was a matter of huge concern that people living there did not enjoy the same rights as people living in other European countries. Armenia and the EU should join their efforts to find the right approach to protect the rights of the inhabitants of that area. Summing up, Ms Zohrabyan stressed that no doubt signing the Agreement was of great importance, but its proper implementation was more important still.

Clare Moody (S&D) highlighted the need to make the Armenian people aware and informed regarding the reform process, and stressed that the parliament should take measures to properly inform the people of the reforms.

Heidi Hautala (Greens/EFA) thanked those present for the meeting. She shared her Armenian partners’ viewpoint that the EU also needed reforms. She said that currently Armenia was shifting towards a parliamentary system of governance and she hoped that this shift would enhance the role of parliamentary control in Armenia.

6. Democracy and protection of fundamental rights in Armenia

Margarit Yesayan (Republican Party of Armenia - RPA) spoke on two topics: constitutional reforms in Armenia and transition to a parliamentary system of governance. She drew attention to the constitutional amendments of 2015, highlighting noting some of the key ones, particularly that the people would no longer elect the president of the Republic of Armenia. A number of systemic changes would occur and the parliament would enjoy wider opportunities and would play a more active part in the country’s governance process. There would be better accountability: the prime minister would be elected by the parliament and be accountable to the Parliament by presenting their activity at least twice a month. According to Ms Yesayan, the constitutional amendments in Armenia will also contribute to a more transparent operation of democratic institutions. She also addressed the EU-Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement and said that Armenia would do its best to implement the Agreement.

Edmon Marukyan (‘Way Out’ or ‘Yelk Alliance’) presented the Yelk Alliance’s approaches to the constitutional amendments in Armenia. According to him, the Constitution was passed with numerous violations, some of the constitutional provisions are already effective and in fact nothing has changed in the Republic of Armenia. The adoption of constitutional laws makes it clear that following the constitutional amendments, the parliament has gained no new mechanisms or levers; furthermore, a number of parliament’s powers have passed to the prime minister. Besides, the opposition forces are facing new issues and controversies. According to Mr Marukyan, the constitutional amendments have not resulted and will not result in any positive changes in Armenia; the amendments were introduced for one purpose only, i.e. for
the president and the prime minister to be elected by the parliament, while the parliament lacks any control mechanisms. On behalf of the Yelk Alliance, he said that it would fight for a fully parliamentary state and would do its best to implement the systemic changes needed. Mr Marukyan also touched upon the previous elections, which in his opinion were accompanied by numerous electoral violations and cases of vote-buying. As for the Agreement, he said that his alliance was for its implementation and would strive consistently to ensure that Armenia implements the reforms envisaged in it.

Aghvan Vardanyan (Armenian Revolutionary Federation – ARF) said with reference to the constitutional amendments that the aim had been to ensure provisions that would grant powers to the parliamentary opposition and make it possible for it to counterbalance the majority to the extent possible within such powers. Such provisions now existed in the new Constitution. He also spoke on judicial reform, noting that the new Constitution covered all the constitutional provisions for independence of the judicial system.

Heidi Hautala spoke on three main issues: visa liberalisation, constitutional amendments and election results. With reference to visa liberalisation, she noted that there were about 74 different requirements partly related to implementation of the Agreement, and the Armenian side had to strictly comply with them. As for constitutional amendments, she considered it extremely important to have a system of checks and balances in parliamentary governance. Referring to the election results, she expressed the hope that the shortcomings and failures would be accepted and corrected. She believed vote-buying and administrative abuses were related to the ranked voting system, and called for that issue to be prioritised in the reform of the electoral system.

Clare Moody highlighted the awareness of the Armenian people. She also addressed the issues of corruption and the legal and judicial system, and asked what kind of parliamentary processes were envisaged to prevent corruption to the extent possible.

Andrejs Mamikins (S&D) highlighted Armenia’s role as an Eastern Partnership member and a reliable partner and friend, and noted Armenia’s status as a democratic country within the region.

Mihran Hakobyan (Republican Party of Armenia – RPA) spoke on the results of the parliamentary and local elections held in Armenia in April and November 2017 respectively. He stressed that in particular the 2017 elections were specific for two reasons. Firstly, Armenia was in a transition phase, shifting from semi-presidential governance to a parliamentary governance system. Secondly, it was the first time since independence that none of the opposition forces elected to the parliament had contested the election results. On the local elections, he noted that the most essential change in the recent elections was community engagement. The most essential constitutional amendments also cover the procedure for presidential elections.

Samvel Farmanyan (Republican Party of Armenia – RPA) addressed the issue of electoral reform. He said that the amendments to the Electoral Code were based on previous recommendations by the OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission, previous rulings and interpretations of the Constitutional Court regarding applicability of the Electoral Code provisions, and recommendations by civil society.

He presented the amendments, noting in particular the following:
1. Complete transition to a proportional voting system;
2. The aim is to ensure a stable majority in the National Assembly;
3. Introduction of individual identification/fingerprint technologies;
4. Publication of voter lists;
5. Changing procedures for local elections - in Yerevan, and also in Vanadzor and Gyumri, elections were held using a proportional system;
6. Where the previous Code imposed administrative fines and penalties for numerous electoral violations, the new Code imposes criminal liability and even imprisonment for up to 5 years;
7. Installation of video cameras inside and outside polling stations.

Summing up, Mr Farmanyan noted that both the Central Electoral Commission and the participating political forces had identified violations and flaws in the elections, and stressed that the Electoral Code would be amended by the time of the coming national elections and solutions would be found to eliminate those violations.

Naira Zohrabyan noted that despite the amended law, the elections following the amendments were held on a basis of 100% use of the majority voting system rather than the proportional system. The European partners could see the main issues and omissions related to the elections in the OSCE/ODIHR reports. Ms Zohrabyan noted, though, that those reports stated that there had been significant electoral reform, but she did not share that view. She also expressed her conviction that the current Electoral Code should be radically changed, but added that even with such changes one could not expect fair and free elections in Armenia.

Edmon Marukyan addressed the arguments put forward by the representatives of the authorities and said he did not agree with their position, i.e. that they had not appealed the election results and had not taken the matter to court. According to him, they had appealed to the General Prosecutor’s Office and, once their appeal was dismissed, to the Constitutional Court, but all these processes were in vain. As for the argument that they had not taken part in the constitutional amendment process, Mr Marukyan said that he had personally submitted to a package of proposed amendments to the President, but it had not been accepted. He also advocated a system of checks and balances to counterbalance the representatives of the authorities in the parliament.

Margarit Yesayan made two observations, concerning reduction of the role of parliamentary committees and levers of the opposition forces. She said that following the constitutional amendments, the number of standing committees was reduced, reflecting the reduction in the number of members of parliament. Certain committees had not been abolished, but had been merged with other committees. As for the levers of the opposition forces in parliament, she said this depended on their votes received in the parliamentary elections.

Heidi Hautala said that having heard so many different views, she was convinced that Armenia really has multi-party democracy. Commenting on the role of the international election observers, she took the view that they only came to implement reforms.

Armen Ashtoyan addressed the issue of democracy in Armenia, arguing that Armenian democracy is based on European practices and should be developed on the basis of the models currently applying in European countries. In response to Mr Marukyan’s observation, he said that the number of standing parliamentary committees had been reduced in line with the reduction in the number of members of parliament.
Aram Sargsyan (‘Way out’) spoke on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental freedoms. He thanked the European partners, and particularly Ambassador Świtalski, for their great support for the Armenian people. He said that the electoral improvements had been made possible thanks to the EU’s assistance and the huge efforts made by Mr Świtalski, who had done his best to help the Armenian people and organise proper elections. As for electoral violations, Mr Sargsyan noted that while there were indeed no violations at the polling stations, quite serious violations occurred outside the polling stations and it was almost impossible to challenge them. The only way to eliminate them to some extent was to abandon the ranked voting system.

Naira Zohrabyan spoke on the Government’s draft Law on Preventing Domestic Violence, noting that it had faced many complications. There had even been an attempt to submit the draft law to the parliament, but it had not succeeded, owing to differing perceptions of the draft law in society. She said that broad public discussions had been held with women and children who had suffered violence, but the Armenian stereotypes were such that a considerable number of female victims of violence did not wish to talk about it and considered sharing their stories unacceptable. In conclusion, Ms Zohrabyan said that this was a highly sensitive issue as it concerned the value system of the Armenian people, and asked the European partners to exercise delicacy in that regard. She considered this law to be of the greatest importance, and had already started discussions with the EU ambassadors in Armenia and representatives of EU institutions on providing Armenian parliamentarians with an opportunity to visit shelters for survivors of violence (women and children) in EU Member States, so that they could obtain a clear picture on the matter, given that adoption of the draft law would not on its own resolve the issue.

The second part of the meeting of the EU-Armenia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee opened on 20 December 2017 at 9 a.m., jointly chaired by Armen Ashotyan and Sajjad Karim.

7. Regional security challenges

Aghvan Vardanyan noted that the key issue of Armenian foreign policy was settlement of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh (or Nagorno-Karabakh). All this time, he said, Azerbaijan had attempted to distort the nature and essence of the conflict, rejected the settlement proposals, instigated hatred towards Armenians on the state level and on 2 April 2016 had even gone so far as to direct a large-scale aggression against the peaceful Nagorno-Karabakh people, Nagorno-Karabakhwhich had in its turn failed. While Azerbaijan continued to blacklist any foreign politicians, parliamentarians and artists visiting Nagorno-Karabakh, as well as closing its doors to anyone of even distant Armenian origin and attempting to bribe even European parliamentarians, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh had built their own independent and democratic state, living a creative life abiding by the rules of the civilised world. Also, it was Armenia’s conviction that the unsettled state of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must not have any impact on the rights of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. These rights are every human’s inalienable rights, including: the right to life, the right to organise in public, the right to create one’s own authorities, the right to free communication with the outside world, etc. The settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is based on three fundamental principles of international law: non-use of force or threat of force, territorial integrity, and the right of peoples to self-determination. Mr Vardanyan welcomed the fact that those principles were enshrined in the EU-Armenia Agreement, and expressed the hope that henceforth the official viewpoints of the EU Member States on this issue will stem from the spirit of the Agreement. There was no
alternative if there was to be a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and Armenia was committed to moving ahead on this path. Summing up, Mr Vardanyan said that Azerbaijan should realise and respect the right of the Nagorno-Karabakh people to determine their future, and the security of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians should be guaranteed by all possible means. Only in this case would it be possible to build peace in the region and create a basis for cooperation between states. As for Armenian-Turkish relations, Mr Vardanyan said he had nothing new to add as the state of affairs had remained unchanged for years. He identified three current challenges in Armenian-Turkish relations, as well as Armenia’s approaches thereto:

1. Open agenda of the Armenian Genocide: Armenia’s approach to this matter is quite clear: universal recognition and condemnation of the genocide, globally and especially by Turkey, is of fundamental importance not only for the restoration of historical justice, but also for building mutual trust in the region and prevention of any such atrocities in the future;
2. Armenia’s one-sided blockade, posing a major obstacle to Armenia’s development: the fact remains that Turkey is not ready to establish diplomatic relations and open the border without preconditions;
3. The fact that the signed Protocols cannot in any way relate to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement: Turkey openly supports Azerbaijan on an issue of fundamental national and state importance for Armenia, and it is this support that leads to Turkey’s and Azerbaijan’s consistent policy to isolate Armenia from transport and energy projects under regional partnership.

Sajjad Karim first of all addressed the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, noting that for years the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has claimed numerous innocent victims and has prevented normal development of the region. The European Parliament considers the status quo to be unacceptable, and urges the parties to immediately end the hostilities. At the same time Parliament greatly appreciates the efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement. The EU, in its turn, supports such efforts by taking trust- and peace-building measures on the border and on both sides of the frontier. Such measures are carried out notably through the European Partnership for the Peaceful Settlement of the Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. As for Armenian-Turkish relations, Mr Karim expressed his conviction that apart from the issue of genocide recognition, the conflict with Azerbaijan remains an obstacle to the normalisation of those relations. The European Parliament encourages normalisation of relations between the two countries and supports the position that the border should be opened without any preconditions. Regrettably, the issue becomes even more complicated due to the tension in the region, and particularly the deterioration in relations between Turkey and Russia in connection with the Syrian conflict. Mr Karim added that the European Parliament welcomes and encourages continuous dialogue between Armenian and Turkish civil societies.

Naira Zohrabyan, who is a member of the Armenian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), spoke on the grave challenge currently facing several major international organisations. Azerbaijan, she said, is attempting to smoothly shift the Nagorno-Karabakh issue away from the jurisdiction of the OSCE’s Minsk Group and towards that of some other institutions. Azerbaijan’s ‘caviar diplomacy’ in the PACE had reached an extreme degree, and it was only thanks to Armenia’s efforts that an independent investigative body was set up to discuss corruption scandals. Ms Zohrabyan also invited the European partners to examine the revelations to the effect that, in the guise of diplomatic flights, Azerbaijan has regularly supplied weapons from Eastern Europe to different conflict zones across the globe.
Heidi Hautala said that no doubt everyone wished to emphasise the importance of the Minsk Group Co-Chair’s mediation efforts, but in their capacity as parliamentarians all should consider options as to how they could help find a peaceful solution to the conflict, since, as mentioned before, that conflict has no military solution. Ms Hautala assured those present that the European Parliament members are very much aware of the Azerbaijan-related issues raised by Naira Zohrabyan, and recalled that they had to avoid double standards, i.e. they should be guided by the same standards in any situation involving gross human rights violations and breaches of good governance principles.

Margarit Yesayan/RPA/ spoke on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and called on the European partners to ensure they are guided by real grounds rather than speeches from any of the sides and double standards. Ms Yesayan also requested the European partners to keep in mind, when urging both sides to observe the ceasefire, that it was the Azerbaijani side that always violated the ceasefire, attempting sabotage and manifesting aggression. The four-day April war, she said, was a blatant example of this. In conclusion, she stressed that while there are three principles for settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the European partners should take account of the fact that the people of Nagorno-Karabakh had long ago exercised its self-determination and made its choice. She also called for a strong focus on the security issues affecting the Nagorno-Karabakh people and for the principle of security of the Nagorno-Karabakh people to be added to the three well-known principles she had referred to. She gave the example of the Safarov case, and stressed that the Nagorno-Karabakh people are facing a serious security challenge.

Samvel Farmanyan thanked Sajjad Karim for his special statement following the local and general elections held in Nagorno-Karabakh, and addressed the issue of Azerbaijan’s absolutely unacceptable Nagorno-Karabakh blacklist policy.

Armen Ashotyan noted that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is unique as it had nothing to do with geopolitics and has no religious component. He attached importance to those two circumstances because the Azeri counterparts, he believed, attempted to present the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in international institutions as a geopolitical conflict. Mr Ashotyan also stated that when consulting the European Parliament archives he had found a resolution on the situation in Soviet Armenia adopted by the European Parliament back in 1988, in which it supported the Nagorno-Karabakh movement and condemned the Sumgait massacres. As for the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the Agreement provides for clear definitions. Mr Ashotyan also highlighted the Nagorno-Karabakh people’s political rights and their right to participate in cultural, educational, environmental and other programmes that they are still deprived of. For instance, the status quo prevents the Nagorno-Karabakh people from benefitting from EU-funded programmes, and young people in Nagorno-Karabakh cannot benefit from Erasmus + and other programmes.

8. Adoption of Final Statement and Recommendations

At the end of the meeting, the Committee adopted the Final Statements and Recommendations.