

MALTESE PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION ATTENDS THE SPRING SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE – 26-30 APRIL 2010

Hon Joseph Falzon MP, Hon Beppe Fenech Adami MP, Hon Joseph Debono Grech MP and Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca MP attended the April 2010 Part-Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) which was held in Strasbourg between 26 – 30 April 2009.

Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, President of the Parliamentary Assembly opened the session by requesting that the Members present observe a minute of silence in memory of the 96 victims of the Smolensk tragedy, which fatalities included the late President of Poland, Mr Lech Kaczynski and three former colleagues of the Assembly.

He referred to the near halt of air traffic caused by the volcanic eruption in Iceland and while expressing sympathy to the Icelandic colleagues, remarked how events which no one thought could happen, can suddenly become a serious threat to the normal functioning of our societies. The President of the PACE added that such unforeseen situations can unfortunately arise in other areas of our lives - as a result of unpredictable natural or human-caused events – which events may pose a challenge to the democratic functioning of our societies. Mr Çavuşoğlu emphasized that in the latter case, the Council of Europe has a major role to play in making our democracies stronger and more resistant.

During Tuesday's discussion on the consequences of the economic crisis, Hon Joseph Falzon MP addressed the Parliamentary Assembly on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM). (See document attached) During his speech he forwarded an invitation to the delegates to attend a meeting on 27-28 May 2010 in Malta, where PAM will officially launch the "Mediterranean Panel on External Trade and Investments", to deal with the consequences of the economic crisis, the region is facing.

Apart from the plenary sessions, all Members participated in their respective Committees.

Hon Beppe Fenech Adami MP participated in the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights during which a number of topics were discussed. Some of the Agenda items that were addressed included the following: "Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights: the Interlaken process", "The death penalty in Council of Europe member and observer countries – an unacceptable violation of human rights", "Appointment of rapporteurs for opinion on the impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Council of Europe", and "the situation of Roma in Europe and relevant activities of the Council of Europe".

On Monday 26 April 2010, Hon Joseph Debono Grech MP presented a preliminary draft report on the functioning of democratic institutions in Azerbaijan to the Monitoring Committee. This report was prepared following Hon Debono Grech's appointment as co-rapporteur on the subject matter by the Committee and his subsequent participation on a mission to the country on 8-12 February 2010. The report now stands on the Agenda of the forthcoming Monitoring Committee meeting to be held in Paris on 19 May 2010 during which the document shall be discussed together with any amendments that may be moved . The Committee shall also be required to adopt a draft resolution which would finally have to be presented before the Parliamentary Assembly.

Hon Joseph Falzon MP participated in the Committee on Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs whose agenda included an item on "Biodiversity and climate change".

The Committee also considered this topic in anticipation of the "Biodiversity Day" which was celebrated on Wednesday 28 April. The programme for this event included the signing of a Declaration entitled "Working Together for Biodiversity, Protection of Natural Areas and the Fight Against Climate Change" which was signed by Mr Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, President of the PACE; Mr Ian Micallef, President a.i. of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe; and Mr Jean-Marie Heydt, President of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe. http://assembly.coe.int/CommitteeDocs/2010/20100428_DeclarationBiodiversity.pdf

Hon Marie Louise Coleiro Preca MP took part in the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development. Items on this Committee's Agenda included "The impact of the global economic crisis on migration in Europe", "The European civil aviation industry confronted with the global financial and economic crisis", and "The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) in 2009: facilitating economic integration in Europe".

On an initiative by Hon Marie Louise Coleiro MP and following a formal invitation to this effect by Hon Francis Agius MP, Leader of the Delegation to the PACE on behalf of the whole Maltese delegation, the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development shall be meeting in Malta on the 28-29 May 2010. Considering the importance that the tourism sector holds in the Maltese economy, the opportunity shall be taken to concurrently convene a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Tourism and Development, the objective being that of adding value to the event. Items on the proposed agenda include "Malta in the World Economic Crisis" and "The Tourism Economy in Malta". The plenary Committee shall also be discussing a motion for a resolution moved by Hon Coleiro Preca: "The Challenges faced by small national economies". The preliminary draft agenda of both meetings are being attached.

The following are the Texts adopted during this Spring Part-Session, a copy of which may be downloaded from the following url:

http://assembly.coe.int/ASP/Doc/ATListingSession_E.asp?IDSession=325

Resolution 1716 - [Associating women in the prevention and the solution of unsolved conflicts in Europe](#)

Resolution 1717 - [The social impact of the economic crisis](#)

Resolution 1718 - [The impact of the global economic crisis on migration in Europe](#)

Resolution 1719 - [Women and the economic and financial crisis](#)

Resolution 1720 - [Investing in family cohesion as a development factor in times of crisis](#)

Resolution 1721 - [Wealth, welfare and well-being : how to reconcile them in a changing Europe](#)

Resolution 1722 - [Piracy – a crime and a challenge for democracies](#)

Resolution 1723 - [Commemorating the victims of the Great Famine \(Holodomor\) in the former USSR](#)

Resolution 1724 - [Honouring of obligations and commitments by Montenegro](#)

Resolution 1725 - [The urgent need for a constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

Resolution 1726 - [Effective implementation of the European Convention on Human Rights: the Interlaken process](#)

Resolution 1727 - [Situation in Belarus: recent developments](#)

Resolution 1728 - [Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity](#)

Resolution 1729 - [The protection of "whistle-blowers"](#)

Resolution 1730 - [Post-monitoring dialogue with Bulgaria](#)

Resolution 1731 - [Euro-Mediterranean region: call for a Council of Europe strategy](#)

Recommendation 1908 - [Lobbying in a democratic society \(European Code of conduct on lobbying\)](#)

Recommendation 1909 - [Associating women in the prevention and the solution of unsolved conflicts in Europe](#)

Recommendation 1910 - [The impact of the global economic crisis on migration in Europe](#)

Recommendation 1911 - [Women and the economic and financial crisis](#)

Recommendation 1912 - [Investing in family cohesion as a development factor in times of crisis](#)

Recommendation 1913 - [The necessity to take additional international legal steps to deal with sea piracy](#)

Recommendation 1914 - [The urgent need for a constitutional reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

- Recommendation 1915 - [Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity](#)
- Recommendation 1916 - [The protection of “whistle-blowers”](#)
- Recommendation 1917 - [Migrants and refugees: a continuing challenge for the Council of Europe](#)
- Recommendation 1918 - [Biodiversity and climate change](#)
- Recommendation 1919 - [Euro-Mediterranean region: call for a Council of Europe strategy](#)