

CoE ref: DPP Task Force (2014)1

Strasbourg, 21 January 2014

**“Smart Power – Ways of Enhancing the Council of Europe’s Impact”
Advisory Report by the Think-Tank Task Force
(Strasbourg, January 2014)**

The enclosed advisory report has been prepared by a group of renowned scholars from European think tanks.

This is the first of a series of three reports under preparation as follow-up to the meeting on 4 December 2012, hosted by Secretary General Thorbjørn Jagland, with directors and representatives of 26 European think tanks. The meeting confirmed that the Council of Europe and European think tanks have a common interest in building a closer relationship and that specific formats of cooperation (advisory board, task forces etc.) should be developed. The task-force initiative is part of a larger agenda pursued by the Directorate of Policy Planning to strengthen the links between the Council of Europe and the research and academic community.

Following the meeting, three task forces were identified to work on a theme or concept which, from the Council of Europe’s perspective, seems to be of strategic importance in the near or long-term future. The task forces have been invited to produce a strategic report with specific proposals for decision-making entities of the Council of Europe. The following three topics have been selected:

1. **‘Smart Power – Ways of Enhancing the Council of Europe’s Impact’**
2. **‘The Pan-European Dimension: Ensuring the Use of the Council’s Wider European Membership’**
3. **‘Challenges to European Societies: Identifying Major Risks and Finding Innovative Policies’**

Two task forces are currently operative, one of which has finalised the enclosed report. The third task force is due to start its activities in spring this year.

The task forces consist of up to five high-level and experienced think tank representatives, lending the reports the necessary quality and authority. The task forces work over a period of several months and meet two times: at a workshop which also serves as a launching event and towards the end of the process when the report has been released. The task force representatives work

independently while preparing the report. Interviews and meetings with Council of Europe staff members are an integral part of the task force work.

The Directorate of Policy Planning takes this opportunity to thank the authors of the first report: **Nadia Arbatova** (IMEMO, Moscow), **Jacek Kucharczyk** (Institute of Public Affairs, Warsaw), **Hans Martens** (European Policy Centre, Brussels), **Werner Weidenfeld** (Centre for Applied Policy Research, Munich) and **Richard Youngs** (FRIDE, Madrid), for their valuable insights. The opinions expressed in this work are the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe.

It is intended to organise an informal meeting in Strasbourg in the near future to hold an exchange of views on the ideas and proposals contained in the report.

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