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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW

**DECISION
ON ESTABLISHING
THE COUNCIL OF ETHNIC AND NATIONAL
COMMUNITIES OR MINORITIES
IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

On the basis of Article 43, para. 1 of the Croatian Constitution and Article 4, para. 2 of the Constitutional Law on Human Rights and Freedoms and the Rights of Ethnic and National Communities or Minorities in the Republic of Croatia, representatives of ethnic and national communities or minorities in Croatia (Albanians, Austrians, Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Italians, Jews, Macedonians, Montenegrinians, Muslims, Romany, Ruthenians, Slovaks, Slovenians, Serbs and Ukrainians), at a session held in Zagreb on, adopted the following

Decision on establishing
the Council of Ethnic and National Communities or Minorities
in the Republic of Croatia

Article 1

Hereby the Council of Ethnic and National Communities or Minorities in the Republic of Croatia is established and its members, competence and activities defined.

Article 2

The Council shall be a coordinating and advisory body of representatives of associations of ethnic and national communities or minorities registered on the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

The Council is not a legal person.

The purpose of the Council shall be the coordination of the work of ethnic and national communities or minorities, concerted action in solving problems related to the application of regulations on the protection of ethnic and national communities or minorities and joint communication with Croatian legislative, executive and judicial bodies and with international organisations.

Article 3

Associations of each ethnic and national community or minority shall appoint one representative to the Council each.

The Council shall have a chairman and a vice-chairman. The chairman and the vice-chairman shall be elected by the Council by the majority of votes of all members for a one-year term. In principle, the vice-chairman takes over the position of the chairman in the next term.

The first chairman and vice-chairman shall be elected by the Council at its first session.

Article 4

The Council shall meet at regular sessions (four times a year) and extraordinary sessions. Extraordinary sessions shall be convened at the proposal by at least one third of the Council's members.

Sessions of the Council shall be convened by the chairman or the vice-chairman. Members shall be informed about the date of the session at least one week in advance.

The chairman shall propose the agenda.

The Council shall adopt its rules of procedure.

Article 5

The Council shall carry out the following tasks:

- monitoring the implementation of the policy of maintaining and promoting the protection of ethnic and national communities or minorities;
- considering problems and taking a standpoint on all draft laws and regulations governing the protection of ethnic and national communities or minorities;
- submitting opinions, requests and proposals to the Parliament and Government as well as their bodies;
- cooperating with all state authorities as well as with the bodies of the international community.

Article 6

Each member of the Council may initiate consideration of any topic from the Council's competence.

In order to facilitate and speed up the adoption of a decision, the Council may invite representatives of the Parliament, Government or their bodies to its sessions.

Article 7

The Council shall decide in principle by consensus or (exceptionally) by voting. If a decision has been adopted by voting, the Council shall also report on the standpoints of the minority or other opinions which differ from the majority opinion.

Article 8

The Council shall select from among its members a rapporteur each time it considers that the Parliament, Government or their bodies should be verbally informed on one of its decisions.

Article 9

The work of the Council shall be financed from the funds allocated for the work of all ethnic and national communities or minorities in the Republic of Croatia. The amount of the funds for the current year shall be determined by agreement between the Council and the Office for Ethnic and National Communities or Minorities.

Article 10

Administrative and technical tasks for the needs of the Council shall be carried out by the chairman of the Council in cooperation with and with assistance of the Office for Ethnic and National Communities or Minorities.

Article 11

The Council shall be considered established on the day when this Decision is accepted by all representatives of ethnic and national communities or minorities present. Each representative shall bring to the first (founding) session a credential on his or her appointment to the Council by the representatives of his or her ethnic or national community or minority.

