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Or. Fr.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

**59th MEETING
OF THE COUNCIL FOR DEMOCRATIC
ELECTIONS**

Venice, 15 June 2017 at 10.00 a.m.

DRAFT ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda

The Council is invited to adopt its agenda as it appears in this document.

2. Bulgaria

Following the request of Mr Cesar Florin Preda, Chairman of the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly, the Council is invited to examine, with a view to its adoption, the draft joint opinion by the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR on amendments to the Electoral Code of Bulgaria made between 2014 and 2016, drawn up on the basis of comments by Mr Holmøyvik and Mr Kask as well as Ms Binder (expert, OSCE/ODIHR) ([CDL\(2017\)001](#)); see document ([CDL-REF\(2017\)024](#)).

3. Republic of Moldova

Following the request of Mr Andrian Candu, President of the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova, the Council is invited to examine, with a view to its adoption, the draft joint opinion by the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR ([CDL\(2017\)016](#)) on the draft legislation of the Republic of Moldova relating to the electoral system for the election of the Parliament ([CDL-REF\(2017\)028](#); see also documents [CDL-REF\(2017\)020](#), [021](#) and [022](#)) drawn up on the basis of observations by Mr Barrett, Mr Holmøyvik and Mr Kask as well as Ms Binder (expert, OSCE/ODIHR).

4. Study on referendums - questionnaire

Following a decision by the Scientific Council to launch a study on the dangers of referendum abuse, Mr Alivizatos prepared a draft questionnaire as a first step, which is submitted to the Council for adoption ([CDL\(2017\)022](#)).

5. Identification of electoral irregularities by statistical methods

As agreed at the December 2016 meeting, the secretariat contacted four experts, Mr Bochsler, Mr Medzihorsky, Mr Schürmann and Mr Stark, with a view to preparing a report on the identification of electoral irregularities by statistical methods. Mr Schürmann will present the progress of this work to the Council.

6. Setting minimal standards for electoral systems – intervention by Ms Centemero

Ms Centemero, Rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly on “setting minimal standards for electoral systems in order to offer a basis for free and fair elections” will present the work of the Parliamentary Assembly on this issue (see [PACE document 14072](#)). The President of the Venice Commission spoke on this subject to the Political Affairs Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly on 26 January 2017. The Council is invited to discuss possible co-operation in this area.

7. 14th European Conference of Electoral Management Bodies on “Operational EMBs for democratic elections”

Mr Kask will report on the 14th European Conference of Electoral Management Bodies on "Operational Electoral Administrations for Democratic Elections" held in St. Petersburg on 15-16 May 2017 ([CDL-EL\(2017\)001syn](#)).

8. Communication by the Secretariat

- Activities organised between the Council's 58th and 59th meetings :
 - Long term technical assistance to the Central Electoral Commission of “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” (March-June 2017);
 - Conference on “Financing of political parties in Ukraine: current legislation, recent developments and prospects” (Kiev, 15 March 2017);
 - Round table on “International standards and electoral dispute resolution in Ukraine” (Kiev, 16 March 2017);
 - Legal assistance to the Parliamentary Assembly delegation observing parliamentary elections in Bulgaria, 26 March 2017;
 - International conference on "The use of new information technologies in electoral process: challenges, risks and prospects" (Kiev 27-28 March 2017);
 - International conference on "The financing of political life during the election period"; the conference was followed by a workshop entitled "International perspectives on techniques of control of the financing of election campaigns", (Tunis 28-29 March 2017);
 - Legal assistance to the Parliamentary Assembly delegation observing parliamentary elections in Armenia, 2 April 2017;
 - Legal assistance to the Parliamentary Assembly delegation observing the presidential election in Serbia, 2 April 2017;
 - Several meetings on electoral reform in the Kyrgyz Republic (16-19 May 2017);
 - International seminar on best practices in the electoral field (Buenos Aires, 29-30 May 2017).

9. Future activities

- In addition the following activities are planned from now to the next meeting of the Council:
 - As regards the study on the allocation of seats to constituencies, the secretariat has prepared, as a first step, a table presenting the situation in the various States. Members of the Council for Democratic Elections have been asked to verify and complete the table as required, the revised version of which will be circulated after the session;

- Mr Vargas Valdez will present a proposal for a comparative study on the regulation of the use of internet and social media during electoral processes. The rapid advance of information technology and the increase of internet users has raised the question of how to regulate the internet and social media's use during electoral processes. The study aims to examine how to create an inclusive participatory model of the use of social media during electoral processes while safeguarding freedom of expression;
- Legal assistance to the Parliamentary Assembly delegation observing the parliamentary elections in Albania, 25 June 2017;
- A compilation on electoral disputes should be prepared for the next session of the Commission, with a view to the preparation of a study;
- The draft report on 25 years on "Lessons to be learnt from 25 years of international election observation (IEO), should also be presented to the next session.

10. Co-operation with the OSCE/ODHIR

An exchange of views will take place with the representatives of the OSCE/ODIHR on the possibilities of future co-operation. The OSCE/ODIHR is invited to inform the Council on its current and future activities in the electoral field.

11. Date of the next meeting

The Council is invited to fix the date of its next meeting for Thursday 5 October 2017 at 10.00 am.