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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

120th PLENARY SESSION
(Venice, 11 -12 October 2019)

SYNOPSIS

The Commission

- held an exchange of views with Mr Taulant Balla, member of the Assembly of **Albania**, and with Ms Ilda Zhulali, Adviser to the President of the Republic of Albania, and adopted the opinion on the scope of the power of the President to set the dates of elections, previously jointly examined by the Sub-Commissions on Democratic Institutions and on Latin America as well as by the Council for Democratic Elections on 10 October 2019;
- held an exchange of views with Ms Klothilda Bushka, member of the Assembly of Albania and adopted the opinion on the draft Law of Albania on the finalisation of transitional ownership processes, previously jointly examined by the Sub-Commissions on Fundamental Rights, on National Minorities and on Gender Equality on 10 October 2019;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Rustam Badasyan, Minister of Justice of **Armenia**, and adopted:
 - the opinion on the Constitutional implications of the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), previously jointly examined by the Sub-Commissions on Fundamental Rights, on National Minorities and on Gender Equality on 10 October 2019;
 - the Joint Opinion by the Venice Commission and the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law on the draft amendments to the Judicial Code of Armenia and some other Laws, previously examined by the Sub-Commission on the Judiciary on 10 October 2019;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Mentor Borovci, Director of Legal Office, Office of the Prime Minister of **Kosovo**, and adopted the opinion on the draft Law on legal acts of Kosovo;
- held an exchange of views with Ms Olesea Stamate, Minister of Justice of the **Republic of Moldova**, and adopted the Joint interim opinion of the Venice Commission and of the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI) on the draft Law on the reform of the Supreme Court of Justice of the Republic of Moldova, previously examined by the Sub-Commission on the Judiciary on 10 October 2019;
- was informed of the decision of the Bureau to postpone, at the request of the Macedonian authorities, to the December session the examination of the draft opinion on the Law on the Use of Languages of **North Macedonia**;
- held an exchange of views with Ms Rosa Maria Bartra, President of the Constitutional Committee of the Congress of **Peru**, and with Mr Fernando Castañeda-Portocarrero, Deputy Minister of Justice of Peru, and adopted the opinion on linking constitutional amendments to the question of confidence, previously jointly examined by the Sub-Commissions on Democratic Institutions and on Latin America on 10 October 2019;
- Held an exchange of views with Ms Marija Pejčinović-Burić, **Secretary General of the Council of Europe**;
- Held an exchange of views with **EU Commissioner Johannes Hahn, in charge of European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations**;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Seamus Woulfe, Attorney General of **Ireland**;

- adopted the **Amicus Curiae Brief for the European Court of Human Rights** in the case of *Mugemangango v. Belgium* on procedural safeguards that a State must provide in the framework of a procedure for contesting the outcome of an election or the distribution of seats, previously examined by the Council for Democratic Elections on 10 October 2019;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Manuel da Costa Aragão, President of the Constitutional Tribunal of Angola and President of the **Conference of Constitutional Jurisdiction of Africa (CCJA)**, on bilateral co-operation with the CCJA and co-operation in the framework of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice;
- was informed about the informal exchange of views on constitutional justice between members of the CCJA, the President of the Constitutional Court of Mongolia and Venice Commission members on the topic of the relations between constitutional courts and parliaments, which took place on 12 October in Venice;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Dorj Odbayar, President of the Constitutional Court of **Mongolia**;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Olzhas Danabekov, Head of Legislation Department, Ministry of Justice of **Kazakhstan**, on future co-operation;
- was informed on **follow-up** to the:
 - Joint opinion on the draft law on the legislative initiative of the citizens of Albania;
 - Urgent Opinion on the selection and appointments of Supreme Court judges of **Georgia**;
 - Joint opinion on the law for amending and completing certain legislative acts (Electoral system for the election of Parliament) of the Republic of Moldova;
 - Opinion on the constitutional situation, with particular reference to the possibility of dissolving parliament in the Republic of Moldova;
 - Opinion on the draft election code of **Ukraine**;
- endorsed the **Compilation** of Venice Commission opinions and reports concerning **Electoral Campaigns**;
- was informed by the Enlarged Bureau of the outcome of the exchange of views with a delegation of the Parliament of the Netherlands regarding their request for an opinion on the possibility for national parliaments to control the activities of the European Union and in particular the different institutions of the Eurozone, and decided to carry out a comparative study on **national mechanisms of parliamentary oversight of EU activities**, if there is added value in respect of the already existing scientific material on this topic;
- was informed on constitutional developments in the **United States** and in the **United Kingdom**;
- was informed on the results and conclusions of:

- The 16th European Conference of Electoral Management Bodies co-organised by the Venice Commission on “Election Dispute Resolution” (27-28 June 2019, Bratislava, Slovak Republic);
- The Global Conference on Media Freedom; Workshop on “Keeping journalists safe – What international organisations can do” (10-11 July 2019, London);
- elected, in accordance with Article 6, paragraph 1bis of the Commission’s Revised Rules of Procedure, the four members of the **Committee of Wise Persons** proposed by the Enlarged Bureau, and invited all members interested in being candidates in the elections to the Commission’s offices to be held in December 2019 to contact the Wise Persons;
- was informed on a working visit to **Montenegro** concerning a possible reform of the Judicial Council;
- Was informed on the results and conclusions of the meeting of the **Council for Democratic Elections** (10 October 2019), and in particular on progress of work on the **Report on Election dispute resolution** and the **revision of the Code of good practice on referendums**;
- Held an exchange of views with the representatives of the **Parliamentary Assembly**, the **Committee of Ministers**, and the **Congress of Local and Regional Authorities** of the Council of Europe;
- Was informed on progress in the preparation of a **publication on the Venice Commission** for the occasion of the 30th anniversary, and on the possibility for all members as well as for personalities having co-operated with the Commission to contribute to this volume;
- Confirmed the dates of the **next Plenary Session** as follows: 6-7 December 2019 and confirmed the dates for the 2020 Plenary Sessions as follows: 20-21 March 2020; 19-20 June 2020; 8 October 2020 and 11-12 December 2020.
- Confirmed that the celebration of the Commission’s **30th anniversary** will take place on 9 October 2020 in Palazzo Ducale in Venice.