



COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW

(VENICE COMMISSION)

66th PLENARY SESSION
(Venice, 17-18 March 2006)

SYNOPSIS

The Commission

- adopted, at the request of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, its opinion on the international legal obligations of Council of Europe member States in respect of **secret detention facilities and inter-state transport of detainees;**
- held an exchange of views with Ms Jozefina Topalli, Speaker of the Parliament of **Albania**, and with Mr Ylli Bufi, Vice speaker of the parliament, and adopted its opinion on parliamentary immunity in Albania;
- endorsed the opinion on the different proposals for electing the Presidency of **Bosnia and Herzegovina;**
- was informed about the state of the constitutional reform process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and instructed the rapporteurs to continue to assist the national authorities, including with respect to the resulting amendments to the electoral legislation;
- adopted the joint opinion of the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the draft law of the State Electoral Commission of the Republic of **Croatia;**
- held an exchange of views with Mr Gia Kavtaradze, Minister of Justice of **Georgia**, adopted its interim opinion on the draft Law on the rehabilitation and restitution of property to victims of the Georgian-Ossetian conflict and instructed the rapporteurs to continue to assist the national authorities;
- was informed about progress on constitutional reforms in **Kyrgyzstan;**
- adopted its opinion on the law on the information and security service of the Republic of **Moldova;**

- endorsed the final version of the joint opinion by the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the amendments to the electoral code of Moldova;
- adopted its opinion on two draft Laws amending the law on the Functioning and Organisation of the Constitutional Court of **Romania**;
- adopted the joint recommendations by the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the electoral law and administration of elections in **Serbia**;
- adopted the joint opinion by the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the draft electoral code of « **the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia** »;
- endorsed the final version of the joint opinion by the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on amendments to the law on elections of people's deputies of **Ukraine**;
- adopted the opinion on the **financing of political parties from abroad**, at the request of the European Court of Human Rights;
- adopted, at the request of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, its opinion on **Human Rights protection in emergency situations** ;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Eberhard Desch, Chairman of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice, on the collaboration of the Venice Commission and CEPEJ on the issue of the **excessive length of proceedings**;
- was informed about the **follow-up** to earlier Venice Commission opinions: on the compatibility of the existing legislation in **Montenegro** concerning the organisation of referendums with applicable international standards and on the draft law on the statute of national minorities living in **Romania**;
- held an exchange of views with Ambassador Stephen Howarth, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the Council of Europe and Chairman of the GR-DEM, on co-operation between the **Committee of Ministers** and the Venice Commission;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Peter Schieder and Mr Erik Jurgens, Members of the **Parliamentary Assembly** of the Council of Europe, on co-operation with the Assembly;
- held an exchange of views with the representatives of the **Southern African Judges Commission** as well as with Ambassador James A. Sharkey, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the Council of Europe and with Ambassador Pietro Lonardo, Permanent Representative of Italy to the Council of Europe, on the topic “Constitutional Review in common law countries and countries with specialised Constitutional Courts”;
- held an exchange of views Mr Boualem Bessaïh, President of the Constitutional Council of Algeria, member of the **Union of Arab Constitutional Courts and Councils**, and with Mr. Mohamed Abdel Kader Abdallah, Vice-President of the Constitutional Court of Egypt Secretary General of the Union on possible co-operation with the Union;
- adopted the **annual report** of activities for 2005;

- elected Mr Valeriy Zorkin, member of the Commission in respect of the Russian Federation, as new **member of the Bureau**;
- confirmed the dates of the 2006 sessions (9-10 June; 13-14 October and 15-16 December 2006).