



Strasbourg, 16 October 2006

Restricted
CDL-PV(2006)003syn
Or. Engl.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

68th PLENARY SESSION
(Venice, 13-14 October 2006)

SYNOPSIS

The Commission

- paid its respects to Mr Henrik Zahle, member for Denmark since 2001, who recently passed away;
- adopted the **guidelines on the holding of referendums** and decided to transmit them to the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional authorities of the Council of Europe;
- was informed about two requests for an *amicus curiae* opinion by the Constitutional Court of Armenia on the constitutionality of certain provisions of the Law on Political Parties and of the Election Code of **Armenia**;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Shahin Aliyev, Head of the Department of Legislation and Legal Expertise of the Office of the President of the Republic of **Azerbaijan**, on the electoral law of that country and adopted the opinion on the Law on freedom of assembly of Azerbaijan;
- adopted the joint opinion with OSCE/ODIHR on the electoral legislation of **Belarus**;
- adopted its opinion on the Law on the financing of political parties in **Croatia**;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Marat Sultanov, Speaker of the Parliament of Kyrgyzstan, on the process of constitutional reform in the **Kyrgyz Republic**;
- examined the comments on the draft law amending the parliamentary Rules of Procedure of **Moldova** and instructed the rapporteurs to draw up a consolidated opinion on the basis of the discussions and to transmit it to the Moldovan authorities;
- was informed about the preparation by Messrs. Tuori and Bradley, on behalf of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, of a report on the compatibility of the legal order of **Montenegro** with European standards, within the framework of this country's request for accession to the Council of Europe;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Ranko Krivokapic, Speaker of the Parliament of Montenegro, on the process of adopting a new Constitution;

- was informed on progress with respect to the adoption of a new Constitution in **Serbia**;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Roman Zvarych, Minister of Justice of **Ukraine**, and adopted: the opinion on the entitlement for former MPs to resume their parliamentary seat in Ukraine upon ceasing their governmental functions; the opinion on the draft Law on the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine; the opinion on the draft Law on freedom of conscience and religious organisations of Ukraine; the joint opinion with OSCE/ODIHR on the draft Law on peaceful assemblies of Ukraine;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Olexandre Medvedko, Prosecutor General of Ukraine, and adopted the opinion on the draft law of Ukraine amending the constitutional provisions on the Procuracy;
- was informed on progress in the preparation of the studies: on the democratic control of the armed forces, at the request of the **Committee of Ministers**; on non-citizens and minority rights; and on the dual vote of persons belonging to minorities;
- decided to hold a UniDem Seminar on certain aspects of the participation of national minorities in public life in Zagreb, in May 2007, in co-operation with the University of Zagreb;
- was informed on progress in the preparation of the study on the democratic control of secret services, at the request of the Committee of Ministers, and instructed all members to inform the Secretariat, before 15 November 2006, about possible national inquiries into secret services in the last ten years;
- was informed on recent constitutional developments in the **Republic of Korea**;
- heard an address by Lord Phillips, Lord Chief Justice of the **United Kingdom**, on terrorism and Human Rights;
- took note of the report on “Second Chambers in Europe: parliamentary complexity or democratic necessity?” and discussed the preparation of a Seminar on the role of the second chamber, in co-operation with the Congress on local and regional authorities of the Council of Europe;
- fixed the dates of the 2007 sessions as follows (16-17 March, 1-2 June, 19-20 October and 14-15 December 2007).