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**EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW**  
**(VENICE COMMISSION)**

**79<sup>th</sup> PLENARY SESSION**  
**(Venice, 12-13 June 2009)**

**SYNOPSIS**

## The Commission

- adopted the joint opinion by the Venice Commission, the Directorate General of Human Rights and Legal Affairs of the Council of Europe (DG-HL) and the OSCE/ODIHR Advisory Council on Freedom of Religion or Belief on the draft law on making amendments and addenda to the law on the freedom of conscience and on religious organisations of **Armenia**;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Gevorg Kostanyan, adviser to the President of Armenia, and adopted the opinion on the draft law on amending the Civil Code of Armenia, subject to certain amendments;
- adopted the opinion on the draft law on Meetings, Rallies and Manifestations of **Bulgaria**;
- adopted the opinion on the draft amendments to the Constitution of **Georgia**;
- adopted the opinion on the Organic law of Georgia on changes and additions to the Organic law on Political Unions of citizens;
- adopted the opinion on the draft law on assemblies of the **Kyrgyz Republic**;
- discussed the opinion on the draft law on political parties in Kyrgyzstan and authorised the rapporteur to send the preliminary joint opinion of the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR to the Kyrgyz authorities;
- held an exchange of views with Ms Snezana Malovic, Minister of Justice of **Serbia**, and adopted the opinion on the draft Criteria and standards for the election of Judges and Court Presidents in Serbia, and the opinion on the Rules of procedure on criteria and standards for the evaluation of qualification, competence and worthiness of candidates for bearers of public prosecutor's function in Serbia;
- adopted the opinion on the Rules of procedure of the Assembly of "**the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**";
- adopted the joint opinion of the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the Electoral Code of "the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia" including amendments adopted in October 2008;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Mykola Onishchuk, Minister of Justice of **Ukraine**, and adopted the opinion on the Draft law on amending the Constitution of Ukraine presented by the President of the Republic;
- discussed the draft law of Ukraine on the Prosecutor's Office of Ukraine and authorised the rapporteurs to send their preliminary opinion to the Ukrainian authorities;
- adopted the joint opinion by the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the draft law (N° 3366) on elections to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine;
- adopted the report on **the impact of electoral systems on women's representation in politics**;
- adopted the summary of **recommendations on an internationally recognised status of election observers**;

- adopted the joint **guidelines of OSCE/ODIHR and the Venice Commission on media analysis during election observation missions**;
- adopted the report on the **imperative mandate**;
- adopted the report on **private military and security firms** and the erosion of the state monopoly on the use of force, subject to certain additions;
- examined the draft report on the **independence of judges**, and asked members wishing to propose amendments to do so in writing before 15 September 2009 with a view to the adoption of the report at the next Plenary Session;
- was informed on follow-up to the opinion on the Draft Amendments to the Criminal Code of the Republic of Armenia; the opinion on the Draft Amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan; the opinion on the draft law on the Public Prosecutors' service of Moldova; the amicus curiae brief in the case of *Bijelic* against Montenegro and Serbia (Application N°11890/05) pending before the European Court of Human Rights and the opinion on the draft law on prohibiting discrimination of the Republic of Serbia;
- held an exchange of views with the representatives of the Committee of Ministers and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe;
- was informed about the exchange of views between its Enlarged Bureau and the Presidential Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly;
- was informed that the Parliamentary Assembly may ask the Commission for an opinion on the procedure for the election of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and agreed that, prior to considering whether to deal with this matter, it needed to receive a joint request from the Parliamentary Assembly and the Committee of Ministers;
- was informed on constitutional developments in **Japan**;
- was informed on recent constitutional developments in **Luxembourg** and on the request by Luxembourg for an opinion of the Venice Commission on the draft constitutional amendments;
- fixed the dates of the next sessions as follows:  
9-10 October 2009 ; 11-12 December 2009; 12-13 March 2010; 4-5 June 2010; 15-16 October 2010; 17-18 December 2010.