

Nyt fra E u r o p a r å d e t

Opdatering juni og kalender juli
Pressemeddelelse DK 9/05, 5. juli 2005

Council of Europe parliamentarians urge Russia to improve its democracy

Strasbourg, 22.06.2005 – The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) today urged Russia to improve its democracy, calling for more power for the Russian parliament, pluralist and impartial broadcasting and normal conditions for civil society.

In a reference to the reforms of autumn 2004, the Assembly declared: “In order for democracy to function properly, power must not only be vertically reinforced but also horizontally shared.”

While acknowledging that the authorities had to deal with serious problems which threatened the country – such as terrorism, corruption or irregular privatisations which led to oligarchic control – the parliamentarians said the solutions, even if adapted to Russia’s realities, should be in line with Council of Europe principles.

They called on the Russian authorities to “adjust the direction” of recent reforms, and significantly accelerate the pace of compliance with remaining commitments to the Council of Europe, which Russia joined in 1996.

Other demands included immediate abolition of the death penalty, an end to human rights violations in Chechnya, improvements to the judiciary and “zero tolerance” for the abuse of soldiers. Russia was also asked to cease activities which may undermine the territorial integrity of neighbouring countries, and in particular to withdraw its military forces from Moldova.

PACE also said existing Council of Europe assistance to Russia was insufficient, given its size and diversity, and called for significantly more funds to help it honour its commitments.

The Russian Federation is one of ten Council of Europe [1] member states subject to the Assembly’s monitoring procedure, which involves regular visits to the state concerned and dialogue with the authorities and civil society.

1. . Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Moldova, Monaco, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro, Ukraine.

Terry Davis: “We must develop partnership with the people of Europe”

Strasbourg, 23.06.2005 – “The Summit in Warsaw was not the end of the book. It was the beginning of a new chapter in the life of the Council of Europe,” Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, stressed today addressing the Parliamentary Assembly on the follow-up to the Summit.

“The Heads of State and Government not only reaffirmed democracy, human rights and the rule of law as the basis of the Council of Europe, but also urged us to focus on these three values in all our work – to relate all our activities to the task of translating democracy, human rights and the rule of law into reality throughout Europe,” he said.

The Secretary General pointed to the Summit’s decisions to establish a Council of Europe Forum for the Future of Democracy, a group of wise persons on the long-term effectiveness of the European Convention on Human Rights, a centre of expertise on local government reform and a high-level task force on social

cohesion. He underlined that the Council of Europe should be a campaigning organisation, leading in campaigns against torture and against racism, discrimination, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

“We ask all Europeans to join us in forging unity amidst diversity, by reinforcing a sense of belonging to shared values, by creating a sense of Europe as a civic community, inclusive and cohesive: a source of creativity, open to knowledge, to intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, and to multiple cultures. By so doing, we will deepen our unity and further develop the values which we share with our neighbouring countries and the wider world,” concluded Mr Davis.

PACE President warns that ‘Europe could soon be on the road back to egocentric nationalism’

Addressing the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE) at its summer session in Strasbourg (20–24 June), PACE President René van der Linden stressed that after the referenda which took place in France and the Netherlands on the European Treaty, Europe finds itself in an extremely difficult situation. “If we do not learn from these votes and do not react accordingly, we could soon be on the slippery road back to egocentric nationalism and its dangers,” he said.

“It causes a standstill instead of progress and optimism. It has a negative impact on the necessary and justified solidarity with central and eastern European countries. In this connection I want to pay tribute to the behaviour of those countries at the European Council last week. I share Mr Juncker’s deep disappointment with regard to the position taken by some other governments, which has plunged the European Union into one of the deepest crises of its history. All this, despite the great statesmanship shown by the President of the Council, Mr Juncker,” René van der Linden said with a view to the recent European Council.

“The EU constitutional treaty aims at making Europe more democratic, to improve the decision-making process, to pave the way to a Europe speaking with one voice and to ensure respect for common values, also through the accession of the EU to the European Convention on Human Rights. I would appeal here to the EU, during the reflection period, to proceed with the accession of the European Union or at least the European Community to the European Convention on Human Rights. This would strongly contribute to a common European legal area – for the benefit of all our citizens,” the PACE President said.

Vedtægelser: Den Parlamentariske Forsamlings standing committee møde (Lissabon , 6. juni 2005)

RES 1440 + REC 1705	Recent political developments in “the former Yugoslav Republic of Marcedonia” in the context of regional stability
RES 1441	Development challenges in Europe’s islands
RES 1442	The right to strike in essential services: economic implications
RES 1443	Challenge of credentials of individual members of a national delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly on substantive grounds
RES 1444	Protection of European deltas
RES 1445	Increase of the number of seats of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men to 83
RES 1446	Co-operation and sustainable development in the Adriatic basin
RES 1447	Request for current affairs and urgent debates (Rules 50.2 and 52.2 of the Assembly’s Rules of Procedure)
RES 1448	Deadline for tabling amendments
OPI 256	Budgets of the Council of Europe for the financial year 2006
OPI 257	Expenditure of the Assembly for the financial year 2006

Vedtagelser: Den Parlamentariske Forsamlings sommer-session (Strasbourg, 20.-24. juni 2005)

REC 1706	Media and terrorism
RES 1449	The environment and the Millennium Development Goals
RES 1450	The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals
RES 1451	Contribution of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) to economic development in central and eastern Europe
RES 1452 + REC 1707	Situation in the Middle East
RES 1453 + REC 1708	Current situation in Kosovo
RES 1454 + REC 1709	Disappearance and murder of a great number of women and girls in Mexico
RES 1455 + REC 1710	Honouring of obligations and commitments by the Russian Federation
RES 1456	Functioning of democratic institutions in Azerbaijan
RES 1457 + REC 1711	Follow-up to Resolution 1359 (2004) on political prisoners in Azerbaijan
REC 1712	Follow-up to the Third Summit
RES 1458	Constitutional reform process in Armenia
REC 1713	Democratic oversight of the security sector in member states
RES 1459 + REC 1714	Abolition of restrictions on the right to vote
RES 1460 + REC 1715	Improving the response to mental health needs in Europe

Vedtagelser under sessionen i Kongressen af Lokale og Regionale Myndigheder (Strasbourg, 30. maj - 2. juni)

Subjects	Adopted texts		
	Recommendations	Resolutions	Opinions
The verification of credentials of new members and new appointment procedures		Res N°194	
The revision of the Charter of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe	Rec N°162		
The results of the 14 th Conference of European Ministers responsible for local and			Opin N°25

regional government				
“20 th Anniversary of the European Charter of Local Self-Government”		Res N°195		
Local and regional democracy in Sweden	Rec N°163			
Local and regional democracy in Denmark	Rec N°164			
The fight against trafficking in human beings and their sexual exploitation: the role of cities and regions	Rec N°165			
The regeneration of mining and industrial areas	Rec N°166	Res N°197		
5th Forum of Cities and Regions of South-East Europe (Budva, Serbia and Montenegro, 11-12 October 2004)	Rec N°167	Res N°198		
Natural and industrial disasters: local authorities facing emergencies	Rec N°168	Res N°200		
Major oil spills: the role of local authorities	Rec N°169	ResN°201		
Intercultural and inter-faith dialogue: initiatives and responsibilities of local authorities	Rec N°170	Res N°202		
”Consultation of Local Authorities” - Implementation of the European Charter of Local Self-Government - Articles 4.6, 5, 9.6 and 10	Rec N°171			
Local democracy in Luxembourg	Rec N°172			
Regional media and transfrontier co-operation	Rec N°173	Res N°203		
Youth education for sustainable development: the role of the regions	Rec N°174	Res N°204		
Outermost regions: a challenge to the balanced and sustainable development of European territory	Rec N°175			
Youth education for sustainable development: the role of the regions	Rec N°174	Res N°204		
The NALAS Network (Network of Associations of Local Authorities of South East Europe)		Res N°199		

Reports on racism in Albania, Croatia, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom

Strasbourg, 14.06.2005 – The Council of Europe’s expert body on combating racism, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), today released five new reports examining racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance in Albania, Croatia, Poland, Sweden and the United Kingdom. ECRI recognises that positive developments have occurred in all five of these Council of Europe member countries. At the same time, however, the reports detail continuing grounds for concern for the Commission:

In Sweden: *Executive summary* ▲

Since the publication of ECRI's second report on Sweden, progress has been made in a number of areas. Civil law provisions against discrimination have been extended to a number of important fields of life. There has been an increasing focus in public debate on the different forms of racial discrimination, as reflected in the setting up of two governmental enquiries on structural discrimination and in increased funding of institutions and organisations working against racism and racial discrimination. Work to promote democracy, human rights and respect of difference has been intensified, notably through the Living History Forum. The Swedish authorities have taken additional measures, including legal and financial measures, to combat trafficking in human beings. A system to monitor progress towards the achievement of integration objectives has been put in place.

However, a number of recommendations made in ECRI's second report have not been implemented or have only been partially implemented. In spite of an increased focus on racial discrimination, this phenomenon still affects the daily life of some members of ethnic minorities in Sweden. While discrimination in employment is of particular concern, discrimination is also widespread in housing, access to public places and other areas. The situation of *de facto* segregation in residential areas and schools still runs counter to efforts to promote an integrated society. The active presence of racist organisations in Sweden and their activities, including the widespread dissemination of racist propaganda notably through the Internet, are still of concern to ECRI. The responsibility of these organisations for part of the racist violence and harassment that Swedish society still experiences is stressed.

In this report, ECRI recommends that the Swedish authorities take further action in a number of areas. It recommends that they ratify Protocol No. 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, which lays down a general prohibition of discrimination. ECRI also recommends that the Swedish authorities fine-tune existing criminal and civil law provisions to ensure that they constitute effective tools against racist expression, racist organisations, racially motivated crime and racial discrimination. The Swedish authorities should also take further steps to improve the implementation of these provisions, including in respect of members of racist organisations. ECRI recommends that the Swedish authorities increasingly put the fight against discrimination at the heart of their integration strategies and consequently focus on measures aimed at the majority population. In this context, ECRI recommends that discrimination in employment be given priority attention. ECRI recommends that the Swedish authorities continue and expand their work to ensure that their monitoring systems enable them to monitor progress in the achievement of integration objectives.

These new reports form part of a third monitoring cycle of Council of Europe member states' laws, policies and practices aimed at combating racism. ECRI's country-specific reports are available in English, French and the national language of the country concerned at <http://www.coe.int/ecri>. They cover all member states on an equal footing, from the perspective of protecting human rights. They examine whether ECRI's main recommendations from previous reports have been followed and, if so, to what degree of success and effectiveness.

Møder i juli 2005

(hvor intet andet er nævnt, holdes mødet i Strasbourg)

- 3. Valgobservation i Albanien
- 4.-6. Menneskerettighedskommissæren på besøg i Island
- 4.-7. Ministerkomitéen
- 5.-7. Konference: Stop Violence Against Children: ACT NOW. (Ljubljana)
- 8.-9. Konference: Combatting Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children (Ljubljana)
- 8. Konference: The 20th anniversary of the Charter of Local Self-Government (Lissabon)
- 13. Ministerkomitéen

**Nyt fra Europarådet udgives 11 gange om året af
Europarådets pressekorrespondent i de nordiske lande
Bremerholm 6, DK-1069 København K, Tlf. +45 33 14 15 84, Fax + 45 33 15 54 84
E-mail: arm@sm.dk, Internet: www.coe.int**