

Nyt fra Europarådet

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Democracy needs freedom, says PACE President at the Forum for the Future of Democracy in Moscow

Moscow, 18.10.2006 - "Journalistic freedom being one of the pillars of democracy, state authorities are responsible not only for the legal framework for journalism, but also for the general climate in which journalists are working. They must create conditions for journalists to work freely and independently," said René van der Linden, President of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE), at the opening of the Forum for the Future of Democracy in Moscow, which is examining the role of political parties in democracy-building.

"We cannot accept a situation where the most courageous individuals make themselves possible targets because of their commitment to the principle of the freedom of media," he said, praising the work of assassinated journalist Anna Politkovskaya. He called on the Russian authorities carry out a thorough investigation in order to bring those responsible to justice.

"Democracy needs freedom: freedom of thought and conscience, freedom of assembly and association, the freedom to vote in free and fair elections and, above all, freedom of information and expression. We must unconditionally respect our fundamental values and freedoms in all circumstances," Mr van der Linden said, stressing the crucial importance of the freedom of media as an essential public corrective mechanism of political life.

The PACE President reminded participants that it was the politicians' role to uphold these common values even against the public will. "The death penalty is unacceptable, even if, in many countries, it still has wide support," he said, underlining the unique role of the Council of Europe in assisting all its members to respect its core values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

"As regards the essential human values of integrity, honesty and compassion, we politicians must be an example to our citizens, both in private and public life. Lies and corruption damage the very foundations of our democracies, because they destroy the vital link of trust between the people and those who govern in their name," he argued. He also called for politicians to fight for their ideas and programmes – not for their jobs. Other key factors with regard to the role of political parties in democracy-building were fair and free elections, respect for the diversity of political opinions and respect of the opposition as well as close contact with civil society.

Mr van der Linden also stressed the need for party-building at a 'transnational level'. "If political issues go global, political parties cannot afford not to," he said.

Council of Europe Forum for the Future of Democracy: towards a code of good conduct for political parties

Moscow, 19.10.2006 - The second annual meeting of the Council of Europe Forum for the Future of Democracy, which examined the role of political parties in democracy-building, ended today with the presentation of the conclusions by the General Rapporteur, Mikko Elo.

The conclusions will provide the basis for a report proposing the adoption of a code of good conduct for political parties. Mr Elo's report is due to be debated by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe during its winter session in January 2007.

In a message to the participants, the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, stressed the importance and topicality of the discussions in the different workshops, as well as the active contribution made by political parties and civil society to intercultural and interreligious dialogue. President Putin said that the Forum was one of the highlights of the Russian Chairmanship of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers.

The Forum brought together some 300 participants representing political parties from the Council of Europe's 46 member states, European party networks, public authorities and civil society from all over Europe, as well as numerous experts. Boris Gryzlov, President of the State Duma, Sergey Lavrov, Russia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chairman-in-Office of the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers, Terry Davis, the Organisation's Secretary General, and René van der Linden, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, addressed the participants.

The next meeting of the Forum will be held in Sweden, from 13 to 15 June 2007, and will focus on the subject of human rights and democracy.

European Ministers of Justice: Putting victims' rights on paper and into practice

Yerevan, 13.10.2006 – The Ministers of Justice of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe today recommended taking measures to improve assistance to victims, to reduce the chances of their also being victims of administrative procedures and red tape, and to facilitate their rehabilitation and compensation for the damage suffered.

Meeting in Yerevan with the Armenian Minister of Justice Davit Harutyunyan in the chair, the European Ministers present stressed the need to identify good practices in terms of civil and administrative remedies to protect victims' interests (such as legal aid and advice) and in terms of public and private insurance schemes.

They also called on the Council of Europe to pursue its work against domestic violence by looking into the need for and feasibility of a further legal instrument, specifically on violence against partners.

Welcoming the drafting of a European convention against the sexual exploitation of children, the Ministers pointed out that it was important for it to include victims' rights, as does the European Convention against trafficking in human beings (2005).

The Armenian Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan was present at the opening of the conference.

The text of the resolution adopted by the conference is available on www.coe.int/minjust

European Ministers of Sport: an enlarged partial agreement to promote sport in Europe

Moscow, 24.10.2006 – The Ministers of Sport of the 49 countries party to the Council of Europe's European Cultural Convention, meeting in Moscow on 20 and 21 October, recommended the establishment of an Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) to reinforce pan-European sports co-operation. The

representatives of the sport movement, including UEFA, FIFA, ENGSO and ISCA, took part in this groundbreaking meeting to support discussions on this new platform of co-operation.

The Ministers underlined the importance of sport in building a more humane and inclusive Europe and encouraged member states and non-member states of the Council of Europe to accede to the EPAS as soon as possible. Other international organisations, international sports federations, as well as sports NGOs, have been invited to become active partners of the EPAS.

With a view to promote the values of the European sport model at world level, the ministers designated their representatives in the structures of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

A large preference was expressed in favour of the designation of the French Minister, Jean-François Lamour, as the European candidate representing the public authorities for the position of interim Vice-Chair of the WADA for 2007.

The designation of the Danish Minister, Brian Mikkelsen, to the position of member of the WADA Executive Committee for 2007-2008 and the designation of the Russian Minister, Vyacheslav Fetisov, as a member of the WADA Foundation Board appointed by the Council of Europe for 2007-2009, were also approved.

The 11th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Sport will take place in Greece in 2008.

The resolutions adopted at the end of the meeting are available at www.coe.int/sport.

Major structural deficiencies in judicial systems of Italy, Russia and Ukraine causing repeated violations of the European Human Rights Convention, says PACE

Strasbourg, 02.10.2006 – Major structural deficiencies in the judicial systems of Italy, Russia and Ukraine are causing large numbers of repeated violations of the European Convention on Human Rights, representing a “serious danger to the rule of law” in these three countries, according to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE).

















In a resolution adopted today, the Assembly – which brings together parliamentarians from all 46 states which have ratified the Convention – criticised the excessive length of judicial proceedings in Italy, where many cases take more than the 10 years the Court has ruled is a violation. In Russia, the Assembly said the most important problems were excessive length of pre-trial detention in overcrowded facilities, as well as chronic non-enforcement or quashing of judges’ decisions. There were similar problems in Ukraine, made worse by interference with judicial independence.

The Assembly also deplored separate specific ongoing problems with implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights by Italy, Turkey, Greece, and Romania.

In cases relating to abuses by security services, Russia, Turkey and the United Kingdom still needed to demonstrate conclusive results in providing redress to applicants by conducting effective investigations into the abuses, the parliamentarians said.

The Assembly called on states to set up domestic mechanisms for rapid implementation of the Court’s judgments. If left too long, non-compliance puts at stake the effectiveness of the entire Convention system, the parliamentarians said, and should be seen as a breach of a state’s obligations under the Convention and the Council of Europe Statute.

Vedtagelsen under Den Parlamentariske Forsamlings efterårs-session (2.-6. oktober)

06/10/2006	 RES. 1523 Resolution	Europe's interest in the continued economic development of Russia
06/10/2006	 REC. 1770 Recommendation	The promotion of local self-government along Council of Europe borders
05/10/2006	 RES. 1520 Resolution	Recent developments in Lebanon in the context of the situation in the Middle East
05/10/2006	 RES. 1521 Resolution	Mass arrival of irregular migrants on Europe's Southern shores
05/10/2006	 REC. 1767 Recommendation	Mass arrival of irregular migrants on Europe's Southern shores
05/10/2006	 RES. 1522 Resolution	Establishment of a European remembrance centre for victims of forced population movements and ethnic cleansing
05/10/2006	 REC. 1768 Recommendation	The image of asylum-seekers, migrants and refugees in the media
05/10/2006	 REC. 1769 Recommendation	The need to reconcile work and family life
04/10/2006	 RES. 1518 Resolution	The OECD and the world economy
04/10/2006	 REC. 1766 Recommendation	Ratification of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities by the member states of the Council of Europe
04/10/2006	 RES. 1519 Resolution	The cultural situation of the Kurds
03/10/2006	 REC. 1765 Recommendation	General policy debate on the situation in the Balkans
03/10/2006	 RES. 1517 Resolution	General policy debate on the situation in the Balkans
02/10/2006	 REC. 1763 Recommendation	The institutional balance at the Council of Europe
02/10/2006	 REC. 1764 Recommendation	Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights
02/10/2006	 RES. 1516 Resolution	Implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights

Domme afsagt af Den Europæiske Menneskerettighedsdomstol i nordiske sager

- 10.10.06 Fryckman v. Finland (no. 36288/97): violation of Articles 6 §1 (right to a fair trial within a reasonable time)
- 10.10.06 Sali v. Sweden (no. 67070/01): friendly settlement.

Møder i november

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

- 1-2. Regionalt seminar: Action against trafficking in human beings (Oslo)
3. Møde mellem Europarådet og EU (Bruxelles)*
8. Ministerkomitéen
- 9.-10. Justits- og Indenrigsministermøde: Improvement of European co-operation in the criminal justice field (Moskva)
- 9.-10. Forum 2006: Achieving social cohesion in a multicultural Europe
- 13.-15. Kongressen af lokale og regionale myndigheder: Autumn Institutional Session (Moskva)
15. Menneskerettighedsdomstolen: Grand Chamber høring i sagen Saramati v. France, Norway and Germany (no. 78166/01) - se pressemeddelelse af 30.10.2006
15. Ministerkomitéen
15. San Marino overtager formandskabet i Ministerkomitéen
- 16.-17. ECRI expert seminar: Combating racism while respecting freedom of expression
17. Den Parlamentariske Forsamling: Standing Committee (San Marino)
- 21.-23. Ministerkomitéen
- 23.-24. Animal Welfare Conference
- 24.-25. Launch of campaign against domestic violence (Madrid)
- 27.-28. Ministerkonference i Pompidou-gruppen. Tema: "New signals for drug policies across Europe".

*) The 23rd quadripartite meeting between the Council of Europe and the European Union, a high-level co-ordination meeting, will take place in Brussels on Friday 3 November, at the invitation of the EU Finnish presidency.

The main item on the agenda will deal with relations between the Council of Europe and the European Union, and in particular the follow-up to the report Jean-Claude Juncker presented in Spring 2006 on this matter.

The Council of Europe will be represented by the Chairman-in-office of the Committee of Ministers, Sergey Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Secretary General Terry Davis. The European Union will be represented by the President of the Council, Erkki Toumioja, Finnish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and representatives of the European Commission and the Council. René van der Linden, President of the Parliamentary Assembly, has been invited by the Committee of Ministers' presidency to join the Council of Europe delegation.

"Nyt fra Europarådet" sendes til nyhedsmedierne i de nordiske lande 11 gange om året. Nærmere oplysninger om tidligere og kommende møder kan fås ved henvendelse til: Council of Europe Press Division, Tlf.: +33 3 88 41 25 60, Fax +33 3 88 41 39 11, E-mail: pressunit@coe.int, Internet: www.coe.int

