



Strasbourg, 5 July 2021

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

**127<sup>th</sup> PLENARY SESSION**

**Venice and online, 2-3 July 2021**

**SYNOPSIS**

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 127<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session was held in a hybrid form, in Venice and online.

The Venice Commission:

- Held an exchange of views with Ms Ines Krtalić, Head of the Cabinet of the Ministry of Justice of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and adopted the Opinion on the draft Law on preventing conflict of interests in the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- Held and an exchange of views with Mr Gergely Ekler, State Secretary for the Ministry of Family Affairs of **Hungary** and with Ms Anikó Raisz, State Secretary for the Ministry of Justice, and adopted the opinion on the constitutional amendments adopted by the Hungarian parliament in December 2020, previously examined by the Sub-Commissions on Democratic Institutions and on Fundamental Rights at their joint hybrid meeting on 1 July 2021;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Andrey Klishas, Chairman of the Committee on Constitutional Legislation and State Construction of the Federation Council of the **Russian Federation** and with Ms Olga Vorobyeva, Deputy Director of the Department for Non-Profit Organisations of the Ministry of Justice, and adopted the Opinion on the compatibility with international human rights standards of a series of bills introduced to the Russian State Duma between 10 and 23 November 2020, to amend laws affecting “foreign agents”, previously examined by the Sub-Commissions on Democratic Institutions and on Fundamental Rights at their joint hybrid meeting on 1 July 2021;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Birol Özcan, Deputy Head of Department, Department for Relations with Civil Society, Ministry of Interior of **Turkey** and adopted the opinion on the compatibility with international human rights standards of Law no. 7262 on the Prevention of Financing of the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass, previously examined by the Sub-Commissions on Democratic Institutions and on Fundamental Rights at their joint hybrid meeting on 1 July 2021;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Stelian-Cristian Ion, Minister of Justice of **Romania**, and adopted the opinion on the draft Law for dismantling the section for the investigation of offences committed within the judiciary of Romania;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Andrii Kostin, Chairperson of the Committee on Legal Policy of the Verkhovna Rada of **Ukraine**, on the on-going reforms in the field of the judiciary in Ukraine and endorsed:
  - the Urgent Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate General of Human Rights and the Rule of Law of the Council of Europe (DGI) on the draft Law amending provisions of the Code of Administrative Offenses and the Criminal Code of Ukraine regarding the liability of public officials for inaccurate asset declaration (draft law no. 4651), issued on 6 May 2021;
  - the Urgent Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate General of Human Rights and the Rule of Law of the Council of Europe (DGI) on the draft law on amendments to certain legislative acts of Ukraine concerning the procedure for electing (appointing) members of the High Council of Justice (HCJ) and the activities of disciplinary inspectors of the HCJ (draft law no. 5068), issued on 5 May 2021;
- Endorsed:
  - the Urgent Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR on draft amendments to the Electoral Code and related legislation of **Armenia**, issued on 21 April 2021;
  - the Urgent Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR on the amendments to the Election Code of **Georgia**, issued on 30 April 2021;

- the Urgent Joint Opinion of the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR on revised draft amendments to the Election Code of Georgia, issued on 18 June 2021;
  - the Urgent Opinion on the amendments to the Organic Law on Common Courts of Georgia, issued on 28 April 2021;
  - the Urgent Opinion on the reform of fair trial requirements in relation to substantial administrative fines in **Malta**, issued on 1 June 2021;
  - the Urgent Opinion on the revised draft amendments to the Law on the State Prosecution Service in **Montenegro**, issued on 10 May 2021;
- Held an exchange of views with Ms Elisa de Anda Madrazo, Vice-President of the **Financial Action Task Force (FATF)**;
  - Was informed on follow-up to:
    - the amicus curiae brief for the Constitutional Court of Armenia relating to Article 300.1 of the Criminal Code;
    - the Law supplementing the Criminal Procedure Code concerning the special prosecutor in **Bulgaria**;
    - the Opinion on the draft law of Hungary on the transparency of organisations receiving support from abroad;
    - the Opinion on Constitutional arrangements and separation of powers and the independence of the judiciary and law enforcement in Malta;
    - the Joint Opinion on the Draft Constitution of **Kyrgyzstan**;
  - Was informed on follow-up to its decision of March 2021 to follow the situation concerning the draft amendments to the Organic law on the People's Defender of Armenia;
  - Was informed on the work of the Constitutional Commission of **Belarus**;
  - Was informed of the work of the Inter-Agency Working Group established in order to prepare amendments to the Constitution and to the electoral law of **Bosnia and Herzegovina**;
  - Was informed about the results and conclusions of:
    - a **hearing of the Institutional Affairs Committee of the Belgian Senate** on three special bills amending the special law on the Belgian Constitutional Court relating to the composition of the Court (Brussels and online, 21 May 2021);
    - the **High-Level Conference on Rule of Law in Europe in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic** (Coimbra and online, 17 and 18 May 2021);
    - the **online seminar on the "Execution of decisions of constitutional courts and equivalent bodies – theory and practice"**, organised by the Constitutional Council of Kazakhstan and the Venice Commission (Nur-Sultan and online, 25 June 2021);
  - Took note of the decision of Mr Gianni Buquicchio to step down from the **Presidency of the Commission** but asked him to remain in his functions until the election of the new President in December 2021, which Mr Buquicchio accepted;
  - Elected, in accordance with Article 6, paragraph 1bis of the Commission's revised Rules of Procedure, the seven members of the **Committee of Wise Persons** proposed by the Enlarged Bureau, and invited all members interested in being candidates in the elections to the Commission's offices to be held in December 2021 to contact the Wise Persons;
  - Held an exchange of views with representatives of the **Parliamentary Assembly** and of the **Congress of Local and Regional Authorities** of the Council of Europe;

- Confirmed the dates of the **next Plenary Sessions** as follows: 14-16 October 2021; 9-11 December 2021 and was informed of the dates of its Plenary Sessions in 2022 as follows: 17-19 March 2022 (to be confirmed shortly); 16-18 June 2022; 20-22 October 2022, 16-18 December 2022.