



Strasbourg, 21 March 2022

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Or. Engl.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

130th PLENARY SESSION

Venice and online, 18-19 March 2022

SYNOPSIS

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 130^h Plenary Session was held in a hybrid form, in Venice and online.

The Venice Commission:

- Was informed of the **decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe that the Russian Federation has ceased to be a member of the Council of Europe** as of 16 March 2022;
- Was informed of the decision of the Committee of Ministers on 17 March 2022 **to suspend Belarus from participating in the work of the Venice Commission**;
- Heard a message from Mr Serhiy Holovaty, member of the Venice Commission in respect of **Ukraine**, who was prevented from taking part in the Plenary Session on account of the war in Ukraine;
- Made a [public statement](#) in support of Ukraine;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Karen Andriasyan, Minister of Justice of **Armenia** (online), and adopted the joint opinion of the Venice Commission and the Directorate General of Human Rights and Rule of Law (DGI) of the Council of Europe on the draft laws on making amendments to the Constitutional Law on the Judicial Code and to the Constitutional Law on the Constitutional Court of Armenia;
- Endorsed the Urgent Interim Opinion on Constitutional Reform in **Belarus**, which had been issued on 21 February 2022 issued pursuant to Article 14a of the Venice Commission's Rules of Procedure;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Juan Castro Prieto, Senator, Republic of **Chile** (online), and adopted the opinion on the drafting and adoption of a new Constitution in Chile, previously examined by the Sub-Commissions on Democratic Institutions and on Latin America at their joint hybrid meeting on 17 March 2022;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Ivan Malenica, Minister of Justice and Public Administration of **Croatia**, and adopted the opinion on the introduction of the procedure of renewal of security vetting through amendments to the Courts Act of Croatia, previously examined by the Sub-Commission on the Judiciary at its hybrid meeting on 17 March 2022;
- Held an exchange of views with Ms Albulena Haxhiu, Minister of Justice of **Kosovo**, and adopted the opinion on the revised draft amendments to the Law on the Prosecutorial Council of Kosovo;
- Postponed to its next session the examination of the draft opinion on the Concept Paper on the Vetting of Judges and Prosecutors and draft amendments to the Constitution of Kosovo, at the request of the Minister of Justice;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr George Cătălin Șerban, State Secretary at the Ministry of Justice of **Romania**, and adopted the opinion on the draft law on the dismantling of the section for investigating criminal offences within the judiciary of Romania, previously examined by the Sub-Commission on the Judiciary at its hybrid meeting on 17 March 2022;
- Adopted the report on the Domestic Procedures of **Ratification and Denunciation of International Treaties**;
- Adopted the **Annual Report of Activities 2021**;
- Endorsed the **compilation on legal certainty**;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Henry Houry, Minister of Justice of **Lebanon** (online), in view of the preparation by the Commission of an opinion on the draft Law on the Organisation of the Judiciary of Lebanon;
- Was informed on follow-up to the following opinions:
 - o Albania: *amicus curiae* Brief on the competence of the Constitutional Court regarding the validity of the local elections (CDL-AD(2021)037);
 - o Kazakhstan: opinion on the draft law “on the Commissioner for Human Rights” (CDL-AD(2021)049);
 - o Republic of Moldova, *amicus curiae* Brief for the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Moldova on the constitutional implications of the ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence) (Istanbul Convention) (CDL-AD(2021)044);

- Serbia: Urgent Opinion on the revised draft constitutional amendments on the judiciary (CDL-AD(2021)048); and Urgent Opinion on the revised draft law on the referendum and the people's initiative (CDL-AD(2021)052);
- was informed of the **international round table on “Shaping Judicial Councils to meet contemporary challenges”**, co-organised by the Venice Commission, the University La Sapienza of Rome and the University of Barcelona, to take place in Rome on 21-22 March 2022;
- appointed Mr Kaarlo Tuori as **Honorary President** of the Venice Commission, in recognition of his exceptional and long service to the Commission;
- was informed that the meeting of the **Bureau of the World Conference on Constitutional Justice** would take place in Venice and on-line on 19 March 2022;
- Held an exchange of views with representatives of the **Committee of Ministers**, the **Parliamentary Assembly** (on-line and in presence) and the **Congress of Local and Regional Authorities** (on-line) of the Council of Europe;
- Held an exchange of views with Mr Cristiano Corazzari, Minister for Culture of the **Regione Veneto**;
- Confirmed the dates of the **next Plenary Sessions** as follows: 17-18 June 2022; 21-22 October 2022, 16-17 December 2022. The next Plenary Sessions **will be held in presence**.

The opinions for Kosovo were prepared under the Expertise Co-ordination Mechanism in the framework of the EU/CoE joint programme “Horizontal Facility II”, co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Union and implemented by the Council of Europe. The opinion for Armenia was prepared under the Quick Response Mechanism in the framework of the EU/CoE joint programme “Partnership for Good Governance”, co-funded by the Council of Europe and the European Union and implemented by the Council of Europe.