



COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Strasbourg, 14 March 2005

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION FOR DEMOCRACY THROUGH LAW
(VENICE COMMISSION)

62nd PLENARY SESSION

Venice, 11-12 March 2005

SYNOPSIS

The Commission

- *Paid tribute to the victims of the Madrid terrorist attack of last year;*
- *held an exchange of views with Ambassador Roland Wegener, Permanent Representative of Germany to the Council of Europe and with Ambassador Per Sjögren, Permanent Representative of Sweden to the Council of Europe on co-operation between the **Committee of Ministers** and the Venice Commission;*
- held an exchange of views with Mr Schieder and Mr Jurgens, Members of the **Parliamentary Assembly**, on co-operation with the Assembly;
- was informed about the follow-up to earlier Venice Commission opinions on the appointment of the highest judges in **Albania** and the introduction of individual complaints to the Constitutional Courts of **Turkey** and **Moldova**;
- adopted the opinion on the draft law amending the law on the procedure of conducting gatherings, meetings, rallies and demonstrations in **Armenia**;
- adopted the joint opinion of the Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR on the revised amendments to the electoral Code of **Armenia**;
- was informed of the conference “Our choice: European integration”, which took place in Ljubljana on 19 January 2005 within the framework of the Armenian Chairmanship of the South Caucasus Parliamentary Initiative;
- was informed about co-operation with **Azerbaijan** on electoral matters;
- adopted the opinion on the Constitutional Situation in **Bosnia and Herzegovina** and the Powers of the High Representative;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Vardzelashvili, Deputy Minister of Justice, and with Ms Zhvania, Head of Information and Education Department of the Office of the Ombudsman of **Georgia**, and was informed about recent developments concerning South Ossetia;
- adopted the opinion on the draft constitutional amendments relating to the reform of the judiciary in **Georgia**;
- held an exchange of views with representatives of the government of **Italy** within the framework of the preparation, at the request of the Parliamentary Assembly, of the opinion on the compatibility of the Italian laws on the media (“the Gasparri law”) and on conflict of interest (“the Frattini law”) with the standards of the Council of Europe in the fields of freedom of expression and media pluralism;
- adopted, at the request of the Parliamentary Assembly, the opinion on draft constitutional amendments relating to the distribution of powers between the Federation and the states in **Mexico** in order to address the issue of the disappearance and murder of a great number of women;

- endorsed the comments prepared by Mr Jambrek and Mr Christians on the draft law on religious institutions in **Serbia**;
- was informed on recent constitutional developments in **Serbia and Montenegro**;
- endorsed the comments by Messrs Lapinskas, Bartole and Yves Luchaire on the draft National Strategy on the Reform of the Territorial Organisation System in **Ukraine**;
- held an exchange of views with Mr Pelletier, Minister delegate of Quebec for Canadian intergovernmental affairs, for Canadian francophonie and for the reform of democratic institutions, on the new Council of the Federation of **Canada**;
- examined the preliminary report on existing national remedies for the excessive length of proceedings and held an exchange of views with Mr Desch, Chairman of the European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice (CEPEJ) on future co-operation on this matter;
- adopted the annual report of activities for 2004;
- elected for a period of two years Mr La Pergola as its President as well as Ms Flanagan and Messrs Mifsud Bonnici, Dutheillet de Lamothe and Endzins as its Vice-Presidents. It further elected Messrs Baglay, Solyom and Zahle as members of the Bureau, as well the chairs of its Sub-commissions;
- was informed on the results and conclusions of the meetings of the Council for Democratic Elections ;
- adopted the report on electoral rules and affirmative action for national minorities;
- confirmed the dates of its next Plenary session: 10-11 June 2005.