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24 January 2007

Secret Ballot - European code of conduct on secret balloting including guidelines for politicians, observers and voters

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr Eörsi and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

The right to free elections is enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights. Article 3 of the first Protocol to the Convention reads, "The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislation".

In the parliamentary and public electoral systems in the member states of the Council of Europe there are practices both for secret and open ballots. Referenda and parliamentary elections are secret, as well as procedures of some of the parliamentary decisions.

During its observation missions the Assembly has met different standards and practices concerning secret ballots. Among those the Assembly has faced several cases where secrecy was not ensured and where the argumentation was mostly based upon national traditions or local accepted practices.

To avoid these argumentations, it is of high importance that the member states have a clear set of criteria and rules for ensuring secret ballots as defined and accepted by the Assembly.

We therefore request that Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe prepares a report, with the assistance of the Venice Commission on secret balloting, as a European code of conduct.

Signed (see overleaf)

*Signed*¹:

EÖRSI, Mátyás, Hungary, ALDE
ATANASOVA, Aneliya, Bulgaria, ALDE
BERDZENISHVILI, Levan, Georgia, ALDE
BOKERIA, Giorgi, Georgia, ALDE
BONDARENKO, Olena, Ukraine, ALDE
COSARCIUC, Valeriu, Moldova, ALDE
DEES, Dirk, Netherlands, ALDE
DORIĆ, Miljenko, Croatia, ALDE
DUPRAZ, John, Switzerland, ALDE
EINARSSON, Mats, Sweden, UEL
FARRÉ SANTURÉ, Joan, Albert, Andorra, ALDE
GLĂVAN, Stefan, Romania, ALDE
HOLOVATY, Serhiy, Ukraine, ALDE
HUSEYNOV, Rafael, Azerbaijan, ALDE
IVANOV, Lachezar, Bulgaria, ALDE
IVANOV, Sergei, Estonia, ALDE
JACQUES, Katerina, Czech Republic, ALDE
JURGENS, Erik, Netherlands, SOC
KAUFMANN, Hans, Switzerland, ALDE
KHALIL, Ali, Rashid, Italy, UEL
KOX, Tiny, Netherlands, UEL
KYPRIANOU, Andros, Cyprus, UEL
LAVTIŽAR-BEBLER, Darja, Slovenia, ALDE
LEUTHEUSSER-SCHNARRENBERGER, Sabine, Germany, ALDE
LUNDGREN Kerstin, Sweden, ALDE
MARQUET, Bernard, Monaco, ALDE
MARTY, Dick, Switzerland, ALDE
MELONI, Assunta, San Marino, ALDE
MEREUTĂ, Mircea, Romania, ALDE
MOONEY, Paschal, Ireland, ALDE
NAGHDALYAN, Hermine, Armenia, ALDE
NAKASHIDZÉ, Nino, Georgia, ALDE
ORMONDE, Ann, Ireland, ALDE
PAPADOPOULOS, Antigoni, Cyprus, ALDE
SALLES, Rudy, France, ALDE
STANTCHEVA, Darinka, Bulgaria, ALDE
TEVDORADZE, Elene, Georgia, ALDE

¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group