Parliamentary **Assembly**
Assemblée parlementaire

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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Application to initiate a monitoring procedure concerning the monopolisation of the electronic media and the possible abuse of power in Italy

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr Wodarg and others

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

In virtue of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the jurisprudence of the European Court of European Rights, States are under obligation to protect pluralism of the media.

In its Resolution 1387 (2004) on the monopolisation of electronic media and the possible abuse of power in Italy the Assembly noted that "through Mediaset, the largest print and electronic media group in Italy and one of the largest in the world, Mr Berlusconi controls approximately half the broadcasting activity in the country. As head of government, he is also in a position to exercise indirect influence on the public sector broadcaster, RAI, which is the principal competitor of Mediaset. Given that Mediaset and RAI total close to 90% of television audience between them, Mr Berlusconi exercises unprecedented control over the most powerful media in Italy".

In June 2005 the Venice Commission, in its Opinion in reply to Resolution 1387 (2004), stated that the Frattini law (on conflict of interest) and the Gasparri law (regulation of electronic broadcasting media) do not resolve the problem of monopolisation of electronic media and possible abuse of power in Italy.

The OSCE Representative on the Media has repeatedly expressed his concern as regards the situation of the media in Italy and the fact that Mr Berlusconi's control over electronic media in Italy, both through the ownership of the largest electronic media broadcaster in the country and the largest advertising group and in his role as head of government, constitute a serious democratic anomaly.

Similar preoccupations have been expressed by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to freedom of opinion and expression.

In view of the forthcoming general elections in Italy, which are likely to be held on 9 April, the Assembly resolves to initiate a monitoring procedure concerning the monopolisation of the electronic media and the possible abuse of power in Italy.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed [1]:

WODARG, Wolfgang, Germany, SOC
ATEŞ, Abdülkadir, Turkey, SOC
BARNETT, Doris, Germany, SOC
BRESTENSKÁ, Beáta, Slovakia, ALDE
DAÜBLER-GMELIN, Herta, Germany, SOC
de ZULUETA, Tana, Italy, SOC
DZEMBRITZKI, Detlef, Germany, SOC
GROSS, Andreas, Switzerland, SOC
JURGENS, Erik, Netherlands, SOC
LINDINGER, Ewald, Austria, SOC
LUND, Rune, Denmark, UEL
ØSTERGAARD, Morten, Denmark, ALDE
RIESTER, Walter, Germany, SOC
SCHIEDER, Peter, Austria, SOC
SEVERINSEN, Hanne, Denmark, ALDE
STĂNOIU, Rodica Mihaela, Romania, SOC
STOISITS, Terezija, Austria, SOC
TIMMERMANS, Frans, Netherlands, SOC
ZAPFL-HELBLING, Rosmarie, Switzerland, EPP/CD

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