

Press Release

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Major structural deficiencies in judicial systems of Italy, Russia and Ukraine causing repeated violations of the European Human Rights Convention, says PACE

Strasbourg, 02.10.2006 – Major structural deficiencies in the judicial systems of Italy, Russia and Ukraine are causing large numbers of repeated violations of the European Convention on Human Rights, representing a “serious danger to the rule of law” in these three countries, according to the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly (PACE).

In a resolution adopted today, the Assembly – which brings together parliamentarians from all 46 states which have ratified the Convention – criticised the excessive length of judicial proceedings in Italy, where many cases take more than the 10 years the Court has ruled is a violation. In Russia, the Assembly said the most important problems were excessive length of pre-trial detention in overcrowded facilities, as well as chronic non-enforcement or quashing of judges’ decisions. There were similar problems in Ukraine, made worse by interference with judicial independence.

The Assembly also deplored separate specific ongoing problems with implementation of judgments of the European Court of Human Rights by Italy, Turkey, Greece, and Romania.

In cases relating to abuses by security services, Russia, Turkey and the United Kingdom still needed to demonstrate conclusive results in providing redress to applicants by conducting effective investigations into the abuses, the parliamentarians said.

The Assembly called on states to set up domestic mechanisms for rapid implementation of the Court’s judgments. If left too long, non-compliance puts at stake the effectiveness of the entire Convention system, the parliamentarians said, and should be seen as a breach of a state’s obligations under the Convention and the Council of Europe Statute.

For more information, see <http://assembly.coe.int>

The Parliamentary Assembly brings together 315 members from the national parliaments of the 46 member states.

President: René van der Linden (Netherlands, EPP/CD); Secretary General of the Assembly: Mateo Sorinas.

Political Groups: 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).