

Press Release

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Legal reforms in the Caucasus countries and the prohibition of political parties in Turkey on the agenda of the Venice Commission

Strasbourg, 11.03.2009 – The Council of Europe's Venice Commission is going to discuss the following issues at its forthcoming plenary session taking place on 13 and 14 March 2009 in Venice:

- amendments to the Criminal Code of **Armenia** in relation to the March 2008 events;
- the constitutional referendum in **Azerbaijan**, which inter alia would enable the President to be re-elected more than once;
- **the Georgian** law on occupied territories (Abkhazia and South Ossetia);
- the constitutional and legal provisions relevant for the prohibition of political parties in **Turkey**.

Other opinions to be adopted by the Commission concern:

- the admissibility of a constitutional referendum in **Albania**;
- constitutional amendments in **Georgia**;
- the Draft law on freedom to receive information in **Armenia**;
- the Law on the Constitutional Court of the **Palestinian National Authority**;

Furthermore, the Commission will adopt reports on:

- **an internationally recognised status of election observers**;
- **European standards as regards the independence of the judicial system**

The **EU** Special Representative for the Southern Caucasus, Peter Semneby, Director of Multilateral Relations and Human Rights of the European Commission, Veronique Arnault, and the Director of the **OSCE** Office of Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, Janez Lenarcic, will address the Commission.

For more information, see [draft annotated agenda](#).

The 78th plenary session will start at 9.30 am on Friday 13 March and finish at 12.30 pm on Saturday 14 March (*Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista*, Venice).

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The Venice Commission is an advisory body of the Council of Europe specialised in constitutional matters. Comprised of independent eminent lawyers, it counts 55 member states.

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