

Press Release

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United Kingdom: the Committee of Ministers asks for rapid adoption of the necessary measures to execute the case of Hirst (No. 2)

Strasbourg, 08.12.2009 – The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted last week an Interim Resolution in the case of Hirst v. the United Kingdom (No.2).

In its judgment of 6 October 2005, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights found that the general, automatic and indiscriminate restriction on the right of convicted prisoners in custody to vote fell outside any acceptable margin of appreciation, however wide that margin might be, and was incompatible with Article 3 of Protocol 1 to the Convention.

In its Interim Resolution, the Committee recalled that the United Kingdom authorities committed themselves to a two-stage consultation process and to introduce the draft legislation necessary for the execution of the judgment before Parliament in May 2008. The Committee noted that the second consultation stage ended on 29 September 2009, and that it will be followed by a detailed analysis of the responses by the United Kingdom authorities in order to determine how best to implement a system of prisoner enfranchisement based on the length of the custodial sentence handed down to prisoners.

The Committee expressed serious concern as regards the substantial delay in implementing the judgment which creates a significant risk that the next United Kingdom general election, which must take place by June 2010, will be performed in a way that fails to comply with the Convention.

The Committee urged, therefore, the respondent state to rapidly adopt at present the measures necessary to implement the judgment of the Court.

Link to the Interim [Resolution CM/ResDH\(2009\)160](#)

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Under Article 46 of the European Convention on Human Rights, respondent States have undertaken to abide by the judgments of the European Court of Human Rights. The compliance with this obligation is supervised by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Further information on the execution of the Court's judgments, including the Committee of Ministers' annual reports on its supervision of judgments – are available on www.coe.int/execution

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