



Strasbourg, 12 March 2008

DH-MIN(2008)OB001

**COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON ISSUES RELATING TO THE PROTECTION OF
NATIONAL MINORITIES
(DH-MIN)**

ANNOTATED ORDER OF BUSINESS

**7th meeting
12 - 13 March 2008**

**Strasbourg
Council of Europe
Room G3, New General Building (NBGEN)**

WEDNESDAY 12 MARCH 2008**10:00 – 12:30****Item 1:** **Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda****Item 2:** **Secretariat information on the developments concerning the DH-MIN Opinions on the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendations 1735 (2006), 1740 (2006), 1772 (2006)**

At its fifth meeting in March 2007, the Committee adopted Opinions on the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendations 1735 (2006) on the concept of “nation”, 1740 (2006) on the place of mother tongue in school education and 1772 (2006) on rights of national minorities in Latvia, for further transmission to the Committee of Ministers.

The Committee of Ministers adopted on 16 January 2008 at the 1015th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies the reply to the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1740 (2006) on the place of mother tongue in school education. On 29 January 2008 it will examine draft replies to the Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1735 (2006), on the concept of “nation” and 1772 (2006) on rights of national minorities in Latvia .

Mr Alfonso de Salas, Secretary of the Steering Committee on Human Rights (CDDH) will inform the Committee of the CDDH’s and CM’s actions decisions with regard to the above-listed Opinions, in particular in regard of the added value of drafting guidelines on procedures for developing relations between a state and kin minorities residing in a different state, including in neighbouring states.

Item 3: **Conflict Prevention and Human Rights - the Role of the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities**

Mr Brendan F. Moran, Director in the OSCE Office of High Commissioner on National Minorities will inform the Committee about the work currently undertaken by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities and will answer questions of the members.

Item 4: **Follow up to the examination of the theme on access of national minorities to new media**

At its last meeting in October 2007, the Committee agreed to continue to discuss the issue of access of national minorities to new media at its 7th meeting. It invited the members, who have not yet done so, to submit responses to the questionnaire, by the end of February 2008, with a view to discussing this topic at a forthcoming meeting - once at least 25 replies had been collected.

It further decided to invite representatives of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention and the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to its next meeting to give their overviews of needs and expectations of minorities in the field of media.

To date 21 responses to the questionnaire have been submitted to the secretariat.

Ms Ilze Brands-Kehris, 1st Vice-President of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention will present the findings of the Advisory Committee with regard to needs and expectations of minorities in the field of media and the corresponding practice of the monitoring mechanism.

Ms Mahulena Hofmannová, Member of the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages will make a presentation on the Committee's experience in regard of promoting access to media broadcasting in regional or minority languages.

Following these presentations, the Committee will exchange views on the possible future work on this theme.

14:30 – 17:30

Item 5: Examination of the theme of the promotion of use of native languages in minority communities

At its last meeting in October 2007, the Committee started to hear testimonies on good practices in the field of the promotion of use of native languages in minority communities, starting with a presentation on the experience of the Slovak Republic in teaching Roma children in the Roma language.

The Committee decided to continue to examine this topic and to invite other States, to introduce their case-studies of good practices in this field at the forthcoming meetings.

Mr Mihai Radan, MP, President of the Croatian Union of Romania will make a presentation on the *“Mother tongue education for numerically smaller communities. The case of the Croatian minority in Romania”*.

Mr Dragan Knezevic, Advisor at the Agency for Human and Minority Rights of the Government of the Republic of Serbia will make a presentation on the *“Education in minority languages and official use of minority languages – case study regarding small minority communities in the Republic of Serbia”*.

Ms Marie-Gabrielle Merloz, member of the DH-MIN with respect of France will make a presentation on the *“Position of France on the use of languages of origin and mother tongues in the field of education”*.

Following these presentations, the Committee will exchange views on the possible future work on this theme.

Item 6: Information on the Conference “Ten years of protecting national minorities and Regional or Minority Languages: Institutions and impact”

The Slovak Delegation will inform the Committee about the Conference to mark the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of both the Framework Convention for the Protection

of National Minorities and the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages organised under the Slovak Presidency of the Committee of Ministers, on 11 March 2008 in Strasbourg.

Item 7: ***Tour de table* on recent developments regarding national minorities, including as regards signatures and ratifications of Council of Europe treaties relating to the protection of national minorities and regional or minority languages**

THURSDAY 13 MARCH 2008

9:30 – 12:30

Item 8: **Follow up to the examination of the theme on the specific regulations contained in electoral laws and the laws on political parties that are relevant for national minorities**

At its last meeting in October 2007, the Committee decided to continue to discuss the theme of electoral laws and the laws on political parties that are relevant for national minorities at the seventh meeting and asked all member States to update their contributions.

Professor David Hine, Director of the Centre for the Study of Democratic Government in Oxford updated his report on electoral laws and the laws on political parties that are relevant to national minorities in the light of the contributions provided.

Member States are invited to take a decision on the possible publication of this updated report.

Item 7: ***Tour de table* on recent developments (continuation)**

Item 9: **Examination of the theme of permissibility of ethnic data collection and appropriate methods for gathering such data**

At its two meetings in 2007, the Committee started to examine the issue of permissibility of ethnic data collection and appropriate methods for gathering such data. The Committee heard presentations from Mr Timo Makkonen (Finland) on the ‘European Handbook on Data Collection’, Ms Isil Gachet, Executive Secretary of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and from Ms Eva Souhrada-Kirchmayer, Vice-Chairperson of the Consultative Committee established under the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data (ETS N° 108).

The Committee decided at its 6th meeting to ask the Secretariat to elaborate, in collaboration with the Bureau, a questionnaire on the ethnic data collection. This questionnaire was sent to the Delegations in December 2007 with a request that they

provide preliminary replies (even incomplete) by 15 February 2008 with a view of discussing them at the 7th meeting.

Mr Patrick Simon, researcher at the *Institut national d'études démographiques* (INED) and author of the study on the existing legal and practical framework for ethnic data collection in member States will present the final results of the study.

Following this presentation, Member States are invited to discuss/present their replies on the questionnaire and to share their ideas and/or experience with regard to their national situation and to provide the Secretariat with possible guidance on the possible future work on this theme.

14:30 – 17:30

NB: The venue of Item 10 will be the Room 20 RC Jardin (Human Rights Building)

Item 10: Visit of the Members of the Committee to the European Court of Human Rights

Following a wish expressed at the 6th meeting of the Committee, the members will visit the European Court of Human Rights and will hear a presentation of Ms Françoise Tulkens, Judge at the European Court of Human Rights, President of the Section II on the case law of the European Court of Human Rights pertaining to the rights of persons belonging to the national minorities to be followed by a discussion.

Item 11: Examination of the proposal to establish a database providing country specific information on minorities

At its last meeting in October 2007, the Hungarian Delegation proposed that a basic database (or a comprehensive table) be established within the web-site of the FCNM Secretariat providing country specific information, such as the recognized minorities within a country, the governmental structure dealing with minorities, the list of the minority organizations, etc.

The Secretariat will make a presentation of the existing web-site.

Following this presentation, Member States are invited to provide the Secretariat with guidance on the possible future work in this area.

Item 12: Dates of the next meeting

Item 13: Other business

Item 14: Approval of the list of decisions adopted during the meeting