

Strasbourg, 20 October 2006

DH-MIN(2006)023

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

LIST OF ADOPTED DECISIONS

**4th meeting
19-20 October 2006**

**Palais de l'Europe
Strasbourg
France**

During its Fourth meeting held on 19-20 October 2006 in Strasbourg, the Committee of Experts on Issues relating to the Protection of National Minorities (DH-MIN) adopted the following decisions, with the understanding that the envisaged future activities are subject to the adoption of a new mandate by the Committee of Ministers:

1. The DH-MIN decided to continue at its 5th meeting its reflection on the specific regulations contained in **electoral law and the law of political parties** that are relevant for national minorities, with a view to drawing up and disseminating a document containing also best practices. To that end, the DH-MIN decided to invite Professor David Hine, of the Centre for the Study of Democratic Government in Oxford, to complete his report on “Electoral systems, party law and protection of minorities” (ref.: DH-MIN(2006)013 prov) in the light of the comments made during the meeting. As it continues its work on the issue, the DH-MIN will also draw on the on-going related work of the Venice Commission and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities.

2. The DH-MIN decided to issue the “**Handbook on consultation mechanisms of national minorities**” (ref.: DH-MIN(2006)012), based on contributions prepared by Marc Weller, Director of the European Centre for Minority Issues. It is aimed at assisting States in developing further their consultation policies of minorities, including through the enhancement of their minority consultative mechanisms. The handbook is not a normative document, and its dissemination does not necessarily imply that all Member States agree with its content.

3. The DH-MIN agreed to pursue further its work on **access to national minorities to new media**. It decided to commission additional expert analysis on the way in which minorities’ access to new media is covered by the pertinent provisions of the Framework Convention and the Language Charter. In addition, it invited the members to submit, on the basis of a questionnaire to be formulated by the Secretariat in consultation with the Bureau, example of good practices in the field. It decided to make public the paper on the topic by Mr Moring, as well as comments thereon by Mr Jakubowicz and Mr McGonagle, as DH-MIN information documents, reflecting views of the authors.

4. The DH-MIN agreed to make papers on the theme of **impact of international non-discrimination norms relevant to the protection of national minorities** public as DH-MIN information document, which would incorporate also related comments of the Governments.

5. As regards the **future themes in its work**, the DH-MIN agreed that these should be taken up gradually, so as not to over-burden the Committee’s agenda, which already includes a range of important topics that need to be examined in more detail. It then decided as follows:

- a. In respect of the proposal of Germany **to discuss the issue of permissibility of data collection and appropriate methods for gathering such data**, the DH-MIN decided, as a first step, to invite representatives of the international actors active in this field to its next session to inform the Committee of their work, so as to help the DH-MIN to decide on its possible future work on this theme.
- b. In respect of the proposal of Hungary **to address the promotion of use of native languages in minority communities**, the DH-MIN decided that the Bureau should streamline the proposal and bring it to the Committee for further consideration.
- c. In respect of the proposal of Poland **to examine the use of the existing binding and non-binding instruments concerning the protection of national minorities and non-discrimination in relation to new communities**, the DH-MIN agreed to discuss at its 5th meeting whether it should address this question in its future work.

6. The **DH-MIN elected** Ms Judit Solymosi (Hungary) as its Chair (subject to the approval of the CDDH) and Mr Detlev Rein (Germany) as Vice-Chair, both for a term of one year starting on 1 January 2007.

7. The DH-MIN adopted **a report outlining its activities** (ref: DH-MIN(2006)022) over the last two years, and decided to submit it to the CDDH, proposing that the latter would bring it also to the attention of the Committee of Ministers in an appropriate manner.

8. **As regards the date of its future meetings**, the DH-MIN agreed that, subject to the approval of its new mandate by the Committee of Ministers, the Committee will hold its 5th meeting between 21 and 23 March 2007 and it provisionally agreed that the 6th meeting will be held between 17 and 19 October 2007. The exact length of the 5th next meeting will be decided by the Bureau in the light of the eventual agenda and budgetary resources.