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22 January 2008

## Respect for media freedom

### Motion for a resolution

tabled by Mr Andrew McINTOSH and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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The Parliamentary Assembly recalls its [Resolution 1535 \(2007\)](#) and [Recommendation 1783 \(2007\)](#) on threats to the lives and freedom of expression of journalists as well as its [Resolution 1438 \(2005\)](#) and [Recommendation 1702 \(2005\)](#) on freedom of the press and the working conditions of journalists in conflict zones.

Freedom of expression and information through the media is a necessary requirement of any democratic society. An attack on media freedom is also an attack on democracy, which cannot be tolerated by the member states of the Council of Europe.

The Assembly notes with great regret that, despite these resolutions and recommendations, media freedom in Europe suffers, for instance, from the facts that:

- the judicial investigations into the murder of the journalist Anna Politkovskaya in Moscow on 7 October 2006 have still not produced any concrete results;
- Article 301 of the Turkish Penal Code is still valid legislation in Turkey, although its application violates Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and has created a vicious atmosphere which gave rise to the murder of the journalist Hrant Dink in Istanbul on 19 January 2007;
- journalists must fear for their lives when working in conflict zones, as exemplified most recently by the tragic death of the Norwegian journalist Carsten Thomassen in Kabul, Afghanistan on 14 January 2008.

The Assembly welcomes in this respect the work of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media and the UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression as well as the work of many non-governmental organisations including the International Federation of Journalists (Brussels), the International Press Institute (Vienna), the International News Safety Institute (Brussels), Reporters Without Borders (Paris), the Association of European Journalists (Brussels), the Glasnost Defence Foundation (Moscow) and Article 19 (London).

The Assembly appreciates the interest expressed by the OSCE Representative and the UN Special Rapporteur as well as by many of the non-governmental organisations to work closely together with the Assembly, in particular on the most serious violations of media freedom where a European initiative for national parliamentary action would be of added value.

Therefore, the Assembly resolves to co-operate with these international partners in a structured follow-up to such violations of media freedom.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



*Signed<sup>1</sup>:*

McINTOSH Andrew, United Kingdom  
BRASSEUR Anne, Luxembourg  
FISCHER Axel, Germany  
GROSS Andreas, Switzerland, SOC  
HOOPER Gloria, United Kingdom  
HOVANNISIAN Raffi, Armenia  
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KONEČNÝ Albrecht, Austria, SOC  
PAPADOPOULOS Antigoni, Cyprus  
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1. EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialist Group