Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 12089
27 November 2009

The need for a code of good practice in the field of funding of electoral campaigns

Motion for a recommendation
tabled by Mr Göran LINDBLAD 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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In modern democracies, the political process cannot be accomplished without providing political parties, constituting its key elements, with adequate financial resources that would allow them to fulfil their legitimate role in a satisfactory way. This is particularly obvious during electoral campaigns which are built upon financial funding. In consequence, political finance through private or public sources or a combination of both is inevitable in any democratic system.

At the same time, however, party funding is also potentially a source of corrupt influences. Given the harmful effect of corruption on the effectiveness and sustainability of the democratic system, explicit regulations to prevent and detect corruption linked to funding electoral campaigns is necessary in any democratic system. The majority of Council of Europe member states have introduced different funding regimes in their legislation.

Unfortunately, international evidence shows that there is no unique solution which could be recommended as the most effective and successful mechanism to combat corruption linked to funding electoral campaigns. However, it is possible to identify a number of standards which should be established in order to ensure the effectiveness of the regulatory regime.

The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers include such standards in a code of good practice in the field of electoral campaigns which, once elaborated, should be addressed to Council of Europe member states.

The Code should address the following questions:

– external sources of funding of political parties (public and private support, general principles on donations, donations from abroad);

– sources of funding of candidates for elections;

– electoral campaign expenditure (limits, records);

– transparency;

– supervision (institutional framework for ex ante and ex post control of political party financing and electoral campaigns, financial disclosure requirement);

– sanctions.

The Code should draw from the principles established in the Code of good practice in electoral matters and the Code of good practice for political parties.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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