Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Doc. 12470
17 January 2011

Excessive use of force against Belgian demonstrators

Reply to Written question[1]: Written question No. 590 (Doc. 12433)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers points out that Belgium, like all the other member states, has ratified the European Convention on Human Rights and has undertaken to guarantee that all Convention rights are honoured, including the rights to freedom of expression and to freedom of assembly, guaranteed respectively by Articles 10 and 11 of the Convention, for everyone within its jurisdiction.

2. The Belgium Delegation has informed the Committee of Ministers that the demonstration of 1 October 2010 had been prohibited by the responsible authorities on account of the risks of violence and disturbances of the peace. Furthermore, according to the Belgian authorities, during the action which led to the administrative arrest of 200, and not 500, persons and which also led to the judicial arrest of five persons, the police made use of force within the limits of strict necessity and in a proportionate manner. Finally, from a general point of view, the possibility to make a complaint to the judicial authorities or to report the matter to the standing committee which supervises police activities ("Comité P") is open to anyone contesting police action in Belgium.

1. adopted at the 1102nd meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (12 January 2011)