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An internationally recognised status of election observers

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 1945 (2010)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers reiterates its unwavering commitment to the right to free elections as guaranteed by Article 3 of Protocol No. 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights.
2. It believes that the observation of elections is an important aspect of the organisation of free and fair elections, a fundamental principle in any democratic system. In accordance with the Code of Good Practice in Electoral Matters, endorsed by the Committee of Ministers in a Declaration adopted at its 114th Session (13 May 2004), the observation of elections is a procedural guarantee which must be in place in order to ensure the implementation of the five fundamental principles of a democratic election: universal, equal, free, secret and direct suffrage.
3. The training of national observers, whether appointed by political parties or by civil society, is an important component of the Council of Europe's action plans, drawn up in consultation with other international players, to support the electoral process in member states. This training seeks to promote the implementation of election legislation in full compliance with the European Convention on Human Rights and the opinions of the Venice Commission.
4. The Committee of Ministers welcomes the fact that efforts undertaken at international level regarding the rights and obligations of election observers have resulted in the drafting of a number of texts, approved or adopted by the Council for Democratic Elections and the Venice Commission, such as the Declaration of Principles for international election observation, the Code of Conduct for international election observers and the Guidelines on an internationally recognised status of election observers. The Committee of Ministers encourages member states to take these into account and disseminate them to all those involved in the organisation and observation of elections.
5. The Committee of Ministers duly examined [recommendation 2.3](#) of the Assembly, but was unable to reach, at the moment, an agreement on possible further work on the regulatory framework governing the status of election observers.

1. adopted at the 1126th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (16 November 2011)

