Parliamentary Assembly
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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Opinion 168 (1993)[1]

Application by the Republic of Lithuania for membership of the Council of Europe

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Assembly has received from the Committee of Ministers a request for an opinion on the accession of Lithuania to the Council of Europe (Doc. 6506), in pursuance of Statutory Resolution (51) 30 A adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 3 May 1951.

2. It observes that democratic parliamentary elections held by universal, free and secret ballot took place on 25 October 1992 and on 15 November 1992 and were monitored by an ad hoc committee of the Assembly.

3. The Assembly welcomes the European commitment expressed by representatives of the Lithuanian Parliament's political groups during the meeting held in Vilnius on 22 and 23 December 1992 with the Sub-Committee on Human Rights of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights.

4. The Assembly appreciates the contribution made by Lithuania to the work of the Council of Europe, both at parliamentary level since its parliament obtained special guest status on 18 September 1991, and at intergovernmental level since it acceded to several European conventions, including the European Cultural Convention on 7 May 1992.

5. It attaches great importance to the commitment expressed by the Lithuanian authorities to sign and ratify the European Convention on Human Rights and also to recognise the right of individual application to the European Commission of Human Rights (Article 25 of the Convention) as well as the compulsory jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights (Article 46).

6. It also recalls the Council of Europe's attachment to the principles enshrined in the European Charter of Local Self-Government, an essential precondition for pluralist democracy anywhere, and hopes that this text will be accepted soon by the Lithuanian authorities.

7. The Assembly considers that the Republic of Lithuania is able and willing:

7.1. to fulfil the provisions of Article 3 of the Statute, which stipulates that "Every member of the Council of Europe must accept the principles of the rule of law and of the enjoyment by all persons within its jurisdiction of human rights and fundamental freedoms";

7.2. to collaborate sincerely and effectively in the realisation of the aim of the Council of Europe as specified in Chapter I of its Statute, thereby fulfilling the conditions for accession to the Council of Europe as laid down in Article 4 of the Statute.

8. The Assembly therefore recommends that the Committee of Ministers, at its next meeting:

8.1. invite the Republic of Lithuania to become a member of the Council of Europe;

8.2. allocate four seats to Lithuania in the Parliamentary Assembly.

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1. Assembly debate on 11 May 1993 (31st Sitting) (see Doc. 6787, report of the Political Affairs Committee, Rapporteur: Mr Banks; and Doc. 6811, opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Rapporteur: Mr Oehry). Text adopted by the Assembly on 11 May 1993 (31st Sitting).