



Opinion 175 (1993)¹

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

Parliamentary Assembly

1. On 1 January 1993, the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic (CSFR), a member state of the Council of Europe since 21 February 1991, ceased to exist. On that same day, the Government of the Slovak Republic, one of the two states to emerge from the former federation, indicated that it wished to join the Organisation.
2. The Assembly has received from the Committee of Ministers a request for an opinion on the Slovak Republic's accession to the Council of Europe ([Doc. 6738](#)), in pursuance of Statutory Resolution (51) 30 A adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 3 May 1951.
3. It notes that the constitutional act on dissolution of the CSFR was adopted by the former Federal Assembly, democratically elected by universal suffrage in a free and secret ballot organised on 5 and 6 June 1992. It further notes that the Czech National Council and the Slovak National Council, the legislative assemblies of the two republics constituting the then CSFR, were also elected in this ballot.
4. The Assembly notes that the new Slovak Constitution, which makes the new republic a state ruled by law, came into force on 1 January 1993.
5. The Assembly welcomes the commitment to Europe expressed by the Slovak Parliament in its declaration of 3 December 1992 on the Slovak Republic's intention of joining the Council of Europe.
6. It appreciates the contribution made to its work by the Slovak Parliament since the latter was granted special guest status on 15 January 1993.
7. It attaches great importance to the Slovak authorities' commitment to signing and ratifying the European Convention on Human Rights and its additional protocols, and to recognising 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). It also notes with satisfaction that the Slovak Republic has considered itself bound by the Convention since 1 January 1993.
8. It asks the Slovak authorities to base their policy regarding the protection of minorities on the principles laid down in [Recommendation 1201 \(1993\)](#) on an additional protocol on the rights of national minorities to the European Convention on Human Rights.
9. It takes note of the Slovak authorities' commitment to adopt a legislation granting to every person belonging to a minority the right to use his/her surname and first names in his/her mother tongue and, in the regions in which substantial numbers of a national minority are settled, the right for the persons belonging to this minority to display in their language local names, signs, inscriptions and other similar information, in accordance with the principles contained in [Recommendation 1201 \(1993\)](#).

1. Assembly debate on 29 June 1993 (39th Sitting) (see [Doc.6864](#), report of the Political Affairs Committee, Rapporteur: Mrs Halonen; [Doc.6883](#), opinion of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights, Rapporteur: Mr Schwimmer; and [Doc.6886](#), opinion of the Committee on Relations with European Non-Member Countries, Rapporteur: Mrs Severinsen). Text adopted by the Assembly on 29 June 1993 (39th Sitting).



10. It encourages the authorities of the Slovak Republic to continue the efforts they have begun to eliminate from its legislation all the laws or decrees adopted by previous governments which are likely to contain elements discriminating against a group of persons or an ethnic, national community living on its territory, particularly those concerning "collective guilt".

11. It also takes note, whatever administrative divisions may be introduced in the Slovak Republic, of the declaration made by the Slovak authorities that they will respect the rights of national minorities.

12. The Assembly considers that the Slovak Republic is both able and willing:

12.1. to respect the provisions of Article 3 of the Statute, which states 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";

12.2. to play a sincere and effective part in achieving the aims of the Council of Europe, as set forth in Chapter I of its Statute, thereby fulfilling the conditions for membership, as specified in Article 4 of the Statute.

13. The Assembly accordingly recommends that, at its next meeting, the Committee of Ministers:

13.1. invite the Slovak Republic to become a member of the Council of Europe;

13.2. allocate the Slovak Republic five seats in the Parliamentary Assembly.