



Recommendation 1812 (2007)¹

Political dimension of the Council of Europe budget

Parliamentary Assembly

1. At a time when the Council of Europe finds itself at a crossroads, confronted with the twofold challenge of modernising its operations and coping with the growth of one of its most successful initiatives (the European Court of Human Rights), the involvement of parliamentarians is necessary. It is time to act, not only for the diplomats and judges, but also for the politicians.
2. The crisis currently facing the Council of Europe, with a budget policy based on strict adherence to zero growth in real terms and the constantly increasing demand for resources at the Court, will inevitably lead to the Organisation's collapse.
3. For this reason the Parliamentary Assembly considers that the time has come for a substantive debate on the political dimension of the Council of Europe's budget in the light of the implementation of the decisions taken at the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe in Warsaw in May 2005.
4. In this context the Assembly wonders how genuine was the commitment by the heads of state and government to the full honouring of their obligations as members, when it sees the Committee of Ministers impose the funding of additional expenditure linked to the expansion of the European Court of Human Rights and to other decisions through savings achieved by a significant reduction in appropriations for other sectors of activity, which were nonetheless given equal priority in the decisions taken in Warsaw.
5. The Assembly accordingly wishes to remind the Committee of Ministers of its commitments, as set out in its reply to Assembly [Recommendation 1693 \(2005\)](#) on the Parliamentary Assembly's contribution to the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, while regretting the scant importance attached to Recommendations 1728 (2005) on the budgetary powers of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and 1763 (2006) on the institutional balance at the Council of Europe.
6. The Assembly consequently asks the Committee of Ministers to place at the disposal of the Council of Europe the funds necessary to translate into action the tasks and priorities identified at the Warsaw Summit, which entails allocating financial and other resources not just to the European Court of Human Rights but also to all the other sectors whose activities ranked as a priority at the Summit.
7. Moreover, to bring the Council of Europe's budgetary policy into line with the decisions of the 3rd Summit, the Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers take up the proposals put forward in its various opinions, namely:
 - 7.1. adopt a multi-annual budget framework;
 - 7.2. modify the method of calculating the scales for member states' contributions so as to give greater weight to gross domestic product;
 - 7.3. look into the possibility of setting a mandatory contribution to the budget payable by states having observer status, for an amount to be determined with those states;
 - 7.4. separate the budget of the European Court of Human Rights from the rest of the ordinary budget while keeping the Court within the Council of Europe's budgetary structure;

1. Assembly debate on 3 October 2007 (33rd Sitting) (see [Doc. 11371](#)[Doc. 11371](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, rapporteur: Mr Wille). Text adopted by the Assembly on 3 October 2007 (33rd Sitting).



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- 7.5. set minimum scales for member states' contributions so as to cover at least the administrative cost of a judge at the Court;
 - 7.6. make arrangements for member states' relevant authorities to bear the cost of their national experts' participation in meetings of the various intergovernmental committees;
 - 7.7. involve the Assembly in budgetary decisions, especially those concerning it.
8. Lastly, the Assembly urges the Committee of Ministers, in its composition confined to the member states of the Council of Europe Development Bank, to:
- 8.1. amend the Articles of Agreement of the Council of Europe Development Bank so as to permit it to make financial contributions to programmes of activities in the Bank's fields of action corresponding to the priorities defined at the Warsaw Summit;
 - 8.2. provide for the possibility of the Development Bank granting the Council of Europe loans on advantageous terms for certain investment expenses.