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## **The autonomy of churches and religious communities**

### **Written declaration No. 530**

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This written declaration does not reflect the position of the Assembly; only of those members that have signed it. It will not be considered further by the Assembly.

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Considering that the autonomous existence of churches and religious communities is indispensable for pluralism in a democratic society,

Considering

- the Charter of the United Nations,
- the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 18),
- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 18),
- the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (Article 6),
- the Helsinki Final Act (Article VII),
- the European Convention on Human Rights (Article 9) and the well-established case-law of the European Court of Human Rights,
- the Directive 78/2000/EC of 27 November 2000 (Article 4),
- the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Article 10),
- the European Union Council Resolution of 16 November 2009,

The undersigned, members of the Parliamentary Assembly,

- reaffirm the utmost importance of the right to freedom of religion of churches and religious communities, implying the respect of the following principles: distinction between State and churches, doctrinal and institutional autonomy of the churches and religious communities, neutrality and impartiality of the State on religious matters;
- are concerned by the judgement of the 3rd Section of the European Court of Human Rights, *Sindicatul Pastorul cel Bun v. Romania*, which departs from the well-established case-law of the Court and has wide-ranging implications.

*Signed (see overleaf)*



*Signed*<sup>1</sup>:

VOLONTÈ Luca, Italy, EPP/CD  
AGRAMUNT Pedro, Spain, EPP/CD  
DAVIES David, United Kingdom, EDG  
DOBBIN Jim, United Kingdom, SOC  
DUNDEE Alexander, [The Earl of], United Kingdom, EDG  
FARINA Renato, Italy, EPP/CD  
FRUNDA György, Romania, EPP/CD  
FUSU Corina, Republic of Moldova, ALDE  
GHILETCHI Valeriu, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD  
HALICKI Andrzej, Poland, EPP/CD  
JANTUAN Stella, Republic of Moldova, SOC  
KALMÁR Ferenc, Hungary, EPP/CD  
KANDELAKI Giorgi, Georgia, EPP/CD  
KYRIAKIDES Stella, Cyprus, EPP/CD  
MARCZUŁAJTIS-WALCZAK Jagna, Poland, EPP/CD  
NYKIEL Mirosława, Poland, EPP/CD  
OSCARSSON Mikael, Sweden, EPP/CD  
PALIHOVICI Liliana, Republic of Moldova, EPP/CD  
PINTADO Ángel, Spain, EPP/CD  
PLOTNIKOV Oleksiy, Ukraine, SOC  
POSTANJYAN Zaruhi, Armenia, EPP/CD  
PREDA Cezar Florin, Romania, EPP/CD  
QUINTANILLA Carmen, Spain, EPP/CD  
RADULOVIĆ-ŠĆEPANOVIĆ Valentina, Montenegro, SOC  
RADZISZEWSKA Elżbieta, Poland, EPP/CD  
RUDD Amber, United Kingdom, EDG  
SANÍN Luz Elena, Spain, EPP/CD  
SANTINI Giacomo, Italy, EPP/CD  
SHERSHUN Mykola, Ukraine, ALDE  
STAVROSITU Maria, Romania, EPP/CD  
TAKTAKISHVILI Chiora, Georgia, ALDE  
TOSHEV Latchezar, Bulgaria, EPP/CD  
VEJKEY Imre, Hungary, EPP/CD

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Total = 33

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
EDG: European Democrat Group  
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party  
SOC: Socialist Group