



Resolution 1990 (2014)¹

Final version

Reconsideration on substantive grounds of the previously ratified credentials of the Russian delegation

Parliamentary Assembly

1. On 21 March 2014, two motions for a resolution with regard to the previously ratified credentials of the Russian Federation were submitted to the Parliamentary Assembly. The first one, signed by 74 members, called for the reconsideration, on the basis of Rule 9.1.a of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, of the ratified credentials of the Russian delegation on substantive grounds ([Doc. 13457](#) on the credentials of the Russian delegation). Condemning “without reservation the violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine by the armed forces of the Russian Federation in early March 2014”, and expressing their “gravest concern that members of the Upper House of the Russian Parliament unanimously authorised such action in advance”, the signatories expressed their conviction that there had been a “serious violation of the basic principles of the Council of Europe mentioned in Article 3 of, and the preamble to, the Statute”.

2. The second motion on the suspension of the voting rights of the Russian delegation (Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly) ([Doc. 13459](#)) was signed by 53 members. In particular, the signatories expressed their serious concern about “the persistent failure by the Russian Federation to honour its obligations and commitments” as demonstrated by the “actions of Russian military forces in the Crimean peninsula, as well as explicit threats of military actions in the rest of Ukraine’s territory”. Furthermore, they stressed that “the use of armed forces on the territory of Ukraine was authorised by the Federation Council of Russia on 1 March 2014”.

3. The Assembly considers that the actions of the Russian Federation leading up to the annexation of Crimea, and in particular the military occupation of the Ukrainian territory and the threat of the use of military force, the recognition of the results of the illegal so-called referendum and subsequent annexation of Crimea into the Russian Federation constitute, beyond any doubt, a grave violation of international law, including of the United Nations Charter and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Helsinki Final Act. The launch of military action by Russia was in violation of a memorandum signed between Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom, and Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan in 1994, which undermines the trust in other international instruments, in particular the agreements on disarmament and on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

4. These actions are also in clear contradiction with the Statute of the Council of Europe, in particular its preamble, and the obligations resulting from Article 3, as well as with the commitments undertaken by the Russian Federation upon accession and contained in Assembly [Opinion 193 \(1996\)](#) on Russia’s request for membership of the Council of Europe.

1. *Assembly debate* on 10 April 2014 (16th Sitting) (see [Doc. 13483](#), report of the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the Council of Europe (Monitoring Committee), rapporteur: Mr Stefan Schennach; and [Doc. 13488](#), opinion of the Committee on Rules of Procedure, Immunities and Institutional Affairs, rapporteur: Mr Hans Franken). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 10 April 2014 (16th Sitting).



5. The Assembly regrets that the Russian Federation has persistently rejected the diplomatic efforts of the international community aimed at the de-escalation of the situation, by turning down proposals for international mediation and the establishment of an international observer mission in Crimea, by refusing to enter into direct dialogue with the authorities of Ukraine, and by choosing not to avail itself of international mechanisms, including those available in the Council of Europe, to peacefully resolve the conflict.
6. The Assembly believes that by violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, Russia has created a threat to stability and peace in Europe. The annexation of Crimea and the steps leading to it, have set a pattern which is now being followed by other parts of Ukraine, as demonstrated by the developments in Donetsk, Kharkiv and Lugansk since the first week of April.
7. The Assembly is particularly concerned by the position taken by the members of both chambers of the Russian Parliament at different stages of the process of annexation, including the unanimous vote in the Council of the Federation authorising the use of military force in Ukraine, the approval of constitutional amendments allowing for the annexation of Crimea and the ratification of the illegal treaty on unification.
8. The Assembly regrets that reports of alleged and unconfirmed violations against the Russian-speaking minority and groundless accusations about the extreme-right nature of the authorities in Kyiv have been used for political purposes by many top officials and members of parliament in the Russian Federation in their public statements.
9. The Assembly is deeply concerned by the state of media freedom and freedom of expression in Russia, and in particular by the biased coverage of the events in Ukraine, and even manipulations which have largely contributed to the interethnic instability in the country, as well as by suppression of the public debate and any criticism. The crackdown on the independent media, including online media and journalists, is most worrying.
10. The Assembly is deeply concerned by the continuous failure of the Russian Federation to implement [Resolution 1633 \(2008\)](#) on the consequences of the war between Georgia and Russia, [Resolution 1647 \(2009\)](#) on the implementation of Resolution 1633 and [Resolution 1683 \(2009\)](#) on the war between Georgia and Russia: one year after, by the occupation of the Georgian provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by Russian troops and by the refusal of the Russian Federation to allow European Union monitors and to reverse ethnic cleansing.
11. The present situation of minorities in Crimea, in particular of Crimean Tatars and Ukrainians, raises the utmost concern. The Assembly urges Russia, which is in illegal control of this territory, to ensure that their rights are not violated.
12. The Assembly expresses its anxiety with regard to the intentions of the Russian authorities in the light of the steady and noticeable build-up of Russian military forces along its border with Ukraine. Furthermore, it voices its concern about public statements made by Russian officials with respect to the situation of Russian minorities in a number of Council of Europe member States, which, in the present context, raise understandable fears in the countries concerned.
13. The Assembly strongly condemns the violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian Federation, and considers that such a flagrant violation by a Council of Europe member State of its obligations and commitments requires a strong signal of disapproval.
14. However, the Assembly believes that political dialogue should remain the preferred way to find a compromise, and there should be no return to the pattern of the Cold War. Suspension of the credentials of the Russian delegation would make such a dialogue impossible, while the Assembly constitutes a good platform for keeping the Russian delegation accountable on the basis of Council of Europe's values and principles. The Parliamentary Assembly has the power and the opportunity in this veritable crisis to confront face-to-face one of its member States – the Russian Federation – with questions and facts and to demand answers and accountability.
15. In consequence, in order to mark its condemnation and disapproval of the Russian Federation's actions with regard to Ukraine, the Assembly resolves to suspend the following rights of the delegation of the Russian Federation until the end of the 2014 session:
 - 15.1. voting rights;
 - 15.2. right to be represented in the Bureau of the Assembly, the Presidential Committee and the Standing Committee;
 - 15.3. right to participate in election observation missions.

16. The Assembly reserves the right to annul the credentials of the Russian delegation, if the Russian Federation does not de-escalate the situation and reverse the annexation of Crimea.
17. The Assembly invites the Monitoring Committee to consider setting up an investigative sub-committee tasked with examining and following the developments since August 2013 relating to the conflict.