Parliamentary Assembly
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Initiating Assembly contacts with the Somaliland Parliament, with a view to its possible eventual Partnership for Democracy with the Assembly

Motion for a resolution
tabled by Mr Markus WIECHEL and other members of the Assembly

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This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only those who have signed it

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The Parliamentary Assembly's partnership for democracy has, since its creation in 2009, served to strengthen the links of the Assembly with four recognised partnership for democracy partners. The arrangement has been a great force for improvements in partnership for democracy countries, through their participating parliaments, as regards the Council of Europe's core aims of enhancing democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Considering that this is an inter-parliamentary co-operation arrangement, it would appear desirable that a parliament such as that of the autonomous and self-governing Somaliland should also eventually be able to be a partnership for democracy. This is all the more so since the remainder of Somalia is a *de facto* “failed State” with a virtually inoperative central State structure.

Somaliland has enjoyed free and fair elections to its own parliament for decades with peaceful changes of government and has well-functioning institutions. Somaliland is also waging a resolute campaign against piracy, religious extremism and the practice of female genital mutilation through both its religious and its political authorities, fully in line with another Assembly priority. By offering free schooling for all children, Somaliland is moreover dedicated to a higher education level among its citizens.

Somaliland is the only country in the region with a stable democratic government and where there is freedom of expression. If the progress of Somaliland continues, and if it can guarantee implementation of the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and aim for more openness regarding freedom of religion, then Somaliland merits being welcomed to the Assembly as a partner for democracy.

In conclusion, the Assembly should establish contacts with the Somaliland Parliament in order to build relations to be followed in due course by deepening co-operation in the above-mentioned areas on the road towards a possible partnership for democracy status.

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed[1]*:*

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EC: European Conservatives Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
SOC: Socialists, Democrats and Greens Group