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Persecution against political opponents as a new basis of discrimination

Motion for a resolution

tabled by Ms Laura CASTEL and other members of the Assembly

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

The Parliamentary Assembly has, in the last years, been witness to the ever-growing number of persecutions against political opponents, dissidents and other minorities, based solely on political opinion. In several countries, silencing techniques such as their imprisonment or judicial harassment are often used, as is pointed out by the Assembly in concluding in recent reports.

On one hand, the European Court of Human Rights has rarely dealt with discrimination on the grounds of political opinion. However, it has repeatedly emphasised that freedom of expression, including freedom of political debate, constitutes the foundation of any democracy, and that certain acts, committed by agents of the State to discourage political dissent or punish dissenting political opinions, pose a threat and run contrary to the values of European society.

On the other, through Article 18 of the European Court of Human Rights, the Court has developed a new way to address the escalating number of cases of human rights defenders, politicians, and journalists facing persecution for “other reasons” than those legally established, particularly political.

Finally, stronger regulation at constitutional level may also be required to secure non-discrimination on grounds of political opinion (i.e. similar to the protection offered by Article 14 of the European Court of Human Rights).

In order to complement and strengthen former and current ongoing reports on the topic from a different angle, the Assembly should examine the question of discrimination on the basis of political opinion, with a view to recommending good practices and guidelines to protect political minorities and other political dissenters and avoid further abuse by majorities in power.

Signed (see overleaf)



*Signed*¹:

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1. ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
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NR: Representatives not belonging to a Political Group