Parliamentary Assembly
Assemblée parlementaire
https://pace.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Recommendation 2235 (2022)[1]

Recent challenges to security in Europe: what role for the Council of Europe?

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine has done grievous harm to the international order and unsettled the European security architecture. It represents a clash between two approaches to international relations: one based on dialogue, co-operation and a rules-based international order and another based on spheres of interest and the imposition of options through the use of force.

2. In the face of this challenge, it is necessary to assert the unity of Europe around its values and give a new political impetus to the role of the Council of Europe as the cornerstone European organisation aimed at developing a shared space where democracy, human rights and the rule of law can thrive, in the pursuit of peace based upon justice and international co-operation.

3. The goal to make the Organisation "fully capable of contributing to democratic security", as declared by the Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe at the 1993 Vienna Summit, is today as relevant as ever, given the interdependence between respect for democratic standards domestically and an international position based on the respect for common rules. The Organisation should therefore have a clearer focus on reversing the current backsliding of democracy, proposing ways to rejuvenate the functioning of democracy and promote democratic resilience.

4. At the same time, it is important for the Council of Europe to make better use of its bodies and mechanisms, which can help enhance democratic security and can have greater flexibility and capacity for rapid reaction in the face of negative trends that may deteriorate, sometimes with spillover effects beyond national borders.

5. In light of the foregoing, the Parliamentary Assembly invites the Committee of Ministers to:

5.1. set up a democratic resilience initiative that will monitor democratic developments in member States, building on the work of bodies and mechanisms that already exist within the Council of Europe, and form the basis for enhanced political dialogue to help member States address situations of concern;

5.2. enhance the exchange of best practice in all areas relating to democracy and democratic governance;

5.3. establish a mechanism to monitor developments in Council of Europe member States related to civil society, freedom of association and civil participation and engagement;

5.4. consider strengthening and expanding the Council of Europe's activities relating to confidence-building measures and conflict prevention, including in their civil-society and cross-border co-operation dimensions;

1. *Assembly debate* on 21 June 2022 (19th and 20th sittings) (see Doc. 15541, report of the Committee on Political Affairs and Democracy, rapporteur: Mr Bogdan Klich). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 21 June 2022 (20th sitting).
See also Resolution 2444 (2022).

5.5. convene a 4th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Council of Europe, which would address, *inter alia*, the promotion of democratic security, how to counter the backsliding of democracy, ways to rejuvenate democracy and spur citizen engagement and the setting up of a Council of Europe early warning mechanism to address threats to the rule of law, democratic standards and human rights protection.