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Reconciliation and political dialogue between the countries of the former Yugoslavia

Reply to Recommendation¹: Recommendation 1954 (2011)
Committee of Ministers

1. The Committee of Ministers has examined Parliamentary Assembly [Recommendation 1954 \(2011\)](#) on “Reconciliation and political dialogue between the countries of the former Yugoslavia”, which it had previously communicated to the Steering Committee for Education (CDED) for comments.
2. The Committee of Ministers shares the view of the Assembly that the present context is favourable to regional reconciliation; several regional initiatives, such as the recent regional summits and bilateral high-level meetings, confirm this trend.
3. The Committee of Ministers reiterates its support to the regionally-owned initiatives such as the South-East European Co-operation Process and the Regional Co-operation Council, which have contributed to the positive dynamics in the region and which remain important vehicles in helping to overcome the outstanding regional and bilateral issues.
4. Justice is essential for reconciliation. Full co-operation with the ICTY is of utmost importance, and the recent arrest of Ratko Mladić is a crucial step in this direction. The Committee supports and encourages the efforts made by the governments in the region to address the outstanding issues, such as prosecution for war crimes, missing persons, refugees and internally displaced persons, as well as border disputes.
5. The Committee of Ministers also encourages the grassroots efforts to contribute to reconciliation processes, such as RECOM, which could further contribute to establishing the facts about the war crimes in the former Yugoslavia. The Committee expresses its willingness to consider ways to provide support to these processes.
6. The Committee of Ministers supports and values the work of the Council of Europe in conflict and post-conflict situations. In this context, it draws the attention of the Assembly to the network of schools of political studies in the region. The regional co-operation of the network has now expanded and includes regional initiatives, such as the South-East European School of Local Self-Government and the Regional Programme on Energy for example, and regular bilateral and regional events. In this regard, the Committee considers that the annual Summer University of Democracy is a unique occasion for the young leaders from the region to meet.
7. Several joint Council of Europe/European Union regional projects in the areas of judicial co-operation, as well as work carried out in the field of education of young people in post-conflict situations and in rehabilitating common heritage (Ljubljana Process), have been contributing to the fostering of mutual understanding and dialogue in the region.

1. adopted at the 1119th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (7 September 2011)



8. As regards the execution of the European Court of Human Rights judgment in the *Sejdić and Finci* case v. Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Committee of Ministers regrets that there are no positive developments and reminds the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities that it is their legally-binding obligation to implement the ruling of the Court. The Committee of Ministers expects Bosnia and Herzegovina to comply with the ruling in the near future and is ready to take all the necessary measures to ensure its swift implementation.

9. The Committee of Ministers is well aware of the importance of promoting the principle of non-discrimination and the protection of national minorities in order to further the process of reconciliation and the political dialogue, and will maintain these issues on its agenda, including when reviewing the honouring of obligations and co-operation activities with the countries concerned.